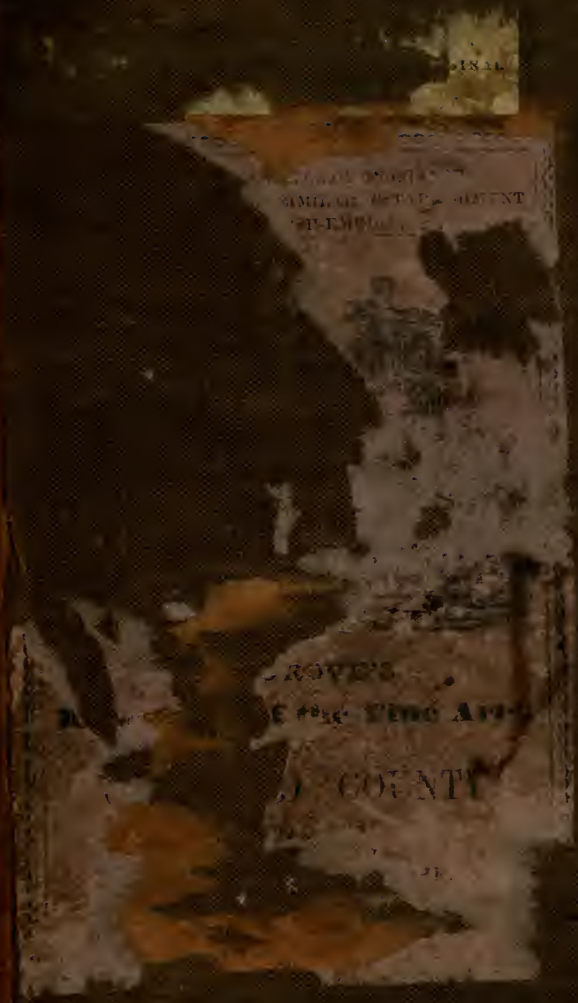

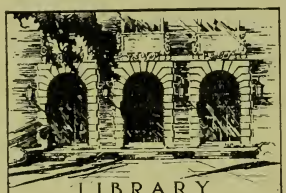

LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY
OF ILLINOIS

823
G76T2W
v. 3

THE WIFE HUNTER,

AND

FLORA DOUGLAS:

TALES BY

THE MORIARTY FAMILY.

EDITED BY

DENIS IGNATIUS MORIARTY, ESQ.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON:
CHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1838.

G. WOODFALL, ANGEL COURT, SKINNER STREET, LONDON.

823
H672w
V.3

FLORA DOUGLAS,

A STORY OF HOLYROOD.

"Let Greatness of her glassy sceptres vaunt,
Not sceptres—no, but reeds, soon bruis'd, soon broken;
And let this worldly pomp our wits enchant,
All fades, and scarcely leaves behind a token.
Those golden palaces, those gorgeous halls,
With furniture superfluously fair;
Those stately courts, those sky-encountering walls,
Evanish all like vapours in the air."

LORD STERLINE'S TRAGEDY OF DARIUS, 1603.

FLORA DOUGLAS,

A STORY OF HOLYROOD.

CHAPTER I.

I LEARN THAT I AM SOON TO SET OUT ON MY TRAVELS.—I KEEP AN "ACCIDENTAL" APPOINTMENT.—I VISIT LA BELLE FRANCE.

It was a beautiful spring afternoon in 1824; the sun shone cheerfully into a small wainscoted parlour in our old family mansion at Tullycraigie in Stirlingshire.

"Malcolm," said my father, "do you know how old you are?"

"Sixteen, my next birthday, sir, I believe."

"Exactly. It is rather an early age for a

youth to set out on his travels; yet, as you will enjoy the protection of your uncle Inverburnie, who is going to the south of France for some months, and who has kindly offered to take charge of you, I have promised that you should accompany him."

"Sir, I am very glad"———

"No doubt you are. I never knew a boy who did not like a ramble. But I expect you to improve by your present excursion; if properly availed of, it will enlarge your conceptions, and polish your manners."

"Sir, I shall do my best."

"I hope so."

And my father left the room.

In the vicinage of Tullycraigie, was a small domain called Snellholm, occupied by a gentleman named Douglas, of ancient descent. Mr. Douglas was laird of Dunsneath, by which territorial appellation he was always designated. The estate from which he derived it, however, he had not visited for many years: it was situated in a remote corner of the

kingdom, in some south-westerly nook near the Mull of Kintyre.

Dunsneath and my father were scarcely acquainted. The only recognition that ever passed between them, was a cold and distant bow, when they met, by accident, in public. This dislike, Dunsneath thought proper to ascribe to an ancient hereditary feud, derived from the ages of mail shirts and battle-axes. My father never spoke of it at all. I did not put faith in its very ancient origin; I fancied, young as I was, that if the truth were told, we might derive it from a somewhat more modern source.

Half way between Snellholm and Tullycraigie, was a bare, rugged hill, called the Hill of Cawr. By a singular and whimsical partition of property, the right of shooting this hill appertained to Dunsneath, as renter of Snellholm; the right of coursing, or hunting the quadrupedal *feræ naturæ*, "hares, conies, brocks, tods," with a lengthened *etcetera*, belonged to my father; while the fee of this

tripartite property centered in a Highland laird with an octosyllabical name, which I do not at this moment remember.

As soon as my father had quitted the room, on the evening already alluded to, I rambled out, and bent my footsteps leisurely to the aforesaid hill of Cawr. In a certain thicket of budding hawthorn on its southern side, I thought I might meet, *accidentally*, the only daughter of Dunsneath, the lively, laughing Flora Douglas; whom I frequently chanced to *rendezvous* in the thicket aforesaid, sometimes escorted by her brother Sholto, and sometimes, peradventure, alone.

These accidental rencontres had happened so often, that there was nothing peculiarly improbable in the supposition that Flora might stroll to the thicket this evening. Forth, accordingly, I sallied; and seated in the thicket I found her.

"Flora, I am going to France."

"Indeed!" cried the maiden, starting up; "and so am I."

"You?"

"Yes—with my aunt, lady Dalton."

"And *I* am going with my uncle Inverburnie. Great advantage, this—my uncle is so sensible and good natured."

"And my aunt," said Flora, "is such a fool, and so waspish. But for *that* I do not care one straw, I promise you. However, as she generally manages to make herself remarkable by affecting the *bel esprit*, every soul we meet will unquestionably laugh at her, and *I* shall come in for my share of the ridicule."

"I thought," said I, "that lady Dalton was clever."

"Clever? why, perhaps she has genius enough to write a sonnet to a cock-robin, or an elegy upon the death of a tom-tit. But she soars quite above these effusions, and grapples with philosophy, and sentiment, and passion."

"You are a pretty sarcastic missy, for sixteen, miss Flora."

"O, I've been well trained. Do you know that she recently has written a treatise, called 'The Philosophy of Phrenology,' to which she

means to prefix her portrait, with the motto, 'A Venus in beauty: a Minerva in wisdom.'"

"Well," said I, "she is certainly a fine looking woman."

"Yes, if you place her half a mile off, and look at her through a diminishing glass. She would make an admirable Patagonian grenadier, if she were not too embonpoint."

"If her novels were not clever," observed I, "people would not buy them, as they do."

"Her novels!" exclaimed Flora,—"pitiable, pitiable rubbish. 'The Thermometer of Love,' and the 'Barometer of the Heart'—Oh, Malcolm, have you read them?"

"No; but they seem very generally read, to judge by the sale."

"Oh, the reason they sell is easily discovered; the mediocracy purchase them, because they emanate from a titled pen; and the fashionable world buy them, in the expectation of feeding their vitiated appetites on the stories of scandal, which she duly transfers from *their* coteries, to her prosy, dozy pages."

"I long to see her portrait, which you speak of."

"The miniature has been painted by Darozzi. The poor painter, of course, was under the necessity of copying the expression she assumed; there 's dishevelled hair, expanded arms, and upturned eyes, to indicate genius; with a look of defiance, to intimate contempt for criticism—the tout-ensemble is that of a fat, bullying goddess—something between a heaven-inspired Pythoness, and a terrestrial fishwoman."

"O, Flora!"

"Well, sir?"

"Nothing—only that I was about to ask if Henry Dalton accompanies his mother on her tour?"

"No, I am sorry to say. Poor Henry is an invalid; he broke his collar-bone by a fall from his horse."

"Indeed! and what could have induced him to do so?"

"O, *pour passer le temps*, I suppose. Even

fractured bones must be a delightful interruption to the intolerable dulness and ennui of Dalton House."

"Flora, you must not speak unkindly of Henry, at all events."

"Nor do I," said she, slightly blushing. "I call his confinement *delightful*, because it has induced *me* to sit with him for two hours every day, reading for his amusement, ever since the accident occurred."

"Well, I am happy to see that you have some good nature," said I.

"And I am still more happy to see that you have not any jealousy," said she.

"Not a spark of jealousy in my composition, Flora."

"What! do you pique me? Do not defy my capacity of exciting that amiable passion," said Flora, laughing.

We continued to chatter away, in merry anticipation of our journey to France.

"Perhaps we may meet there," observed I.

"Perhaps so; yet perhaps not. My aunt is

as eccentric as a comet, and will deviate to-morrow from the route she has chalked out to-day. Our meeting will, therefore, be a matter of chance."

CHAPTER II.

I FORM AN ILLUSTRIOUS ACQUAINTANCE.

It was just three months from the evening on which the conversation I have recorded took place, that my uncle Inverburnie was posting in a southerly direction along the roads of Gascony, on his way to the Chateau de Blasis; at which antique tenement we had received a hospitable invitation to pass a few weeks, from its owner, the marquis de Blasis.

With that sublime and enthusiastic ambition to get over as much ground in as little time as possible, which stimulates all British tourists on the continent, my uncle had urged the postillions to put their horses to their utmost speed; so that we arrived at the outer gate of the domain of Blasis, with smoking, panting steeds,

about two hours sooner than if we had not compelled the poor animals to smoke and pant so pitiably.

Just at this moment another cortége approached at a leisurely pace, from the opposite direction. It contained the comte d'Artois, and some personages of his royal highness's suite. *He* had also been invited to the chateau by the marquis, who was one of the oldest and most faithful adherents of the Bourbon dynasty.

The comte got out of the carriage at the gate, and walked into the domain, leaning on the arm of Polignac. We followed the example, and descended from our dusty and travel-soiled vehicle. The comte, who had occupied the pas d'avance, perceiving that we did so, immediately paused, and joined us with frank and condescending politeness.

Two avenues branched through the forest from the entrance; the comte asked the porter which of them led to the chateau, and was directed to take the southern one. It passed

through an open space which did not exceed in extent an English acre, and then re-entered the trees, whose thick foliage converted our day into twilight, until we had proceeded for nearly half a mile, when they gradually opened and afforded us a view of the chateau de Blasis upon a gentle eminence, with its hundred lines of battlemented roofs, its slender watch turrets, and its giddy towers. There stood the chateau, in all its feudal glories, as grimly formidable as in the distant age when the Sieur Jacques Pierre de Blasis, ancestor of the present possessor, had reared its proud walls, as much for the military service of Louis the Eighth, as for the residence of his own baronial family.

Our party paused to enjoy the magnificent coup d'œil which was thus unexpectedly presented by the opening of the forest. The eminence on which the castle stood, was cut into successive terraces upon the side which fronted the part of the avenue we had reached, and the heavy balustrades with which they were defended, were carved into all the vast variety

of rich, grotesque, fantastic tracery, afforded by the countless forms of gothic architecture. At the foot of this terraced eminence, flowed the majestic expanse of the Garonne, and the giant Pyrenees upreared their forms in the distance.

Charles d'Artois had entered into conversation with Mr. Maxwell of Inverburnie, the relative to whose care my father had entrusted me on leaving Scotland. He also condescendingly honoured me with a share of his notice. I believe the enthusiasm with which I gazed on the glorious scene attracted the attention of his royal highness, who was known to be a passionate admirer of the splendid works of nature.

"That splendid scene," he observed, "must resemble, I think, in its wildness, some of the scenes in your native country."

"Your royal highness flatters Scottish scenery by the comparison. Our scenes may be as wild and picturesque, but they want the

richness that mingles with the forest wildness here."

While we spoke, we had nearly reached the chateau, and were met by the old marquis de Blasis himself, who had been walking on the terraces, supporting on his arm his daughter, the comtesse de Bourval. He received us with all the ceremonious politeness of the ancient regime; and his great age, his antiquated dress, his chapeau-à-plume, his laced coat of chocolate-coloured silk, all tended strongly to impress on the beholder the idea, that the courtly personage who stood bowing at the portals of his feudal dwelling, was rather the revivification of some Seigneur of a long departed era, than a real, bonâ fide octogenarian of our own times.—My attention, however, was speedily diverted from the marquis by an apparition that sent laced coats and chapeaux all to flight; in a word, Flora Douglas and the redundant lady Dalton were ascending the broad marble steps from the trellised arbour

that opened on the shrubberies; and, as the reader will easily believe, I could not, at that moment, either see or hear any thing else. Joy sparkled in the eyes of Flora; she was far more self-possessed, however, than I was. She shook hands with me cordially, and we soon strolled away from the group on the terrace, leaving lady Dalton busily studying the expression of the count D'Artois' countenance, of which she intended making a sketch to illustrate her "Philosophy of Phrenology."

"Oh, miladi Dalton, O! miladi!" exclaimed Flora, with a humorous expression of sarcasm; "she is surely *the* impersonation of bizarrerie. When we were leaving Edinburgh, aunt Mortimer, who is really very much attached to the queer creature, shed tears at parting from her. Lady Dalton put her handkerchief to her eyes, then suddenly withdrew it, and said with *empressement*, 'I thank you for your tears, sister Mortimer, and I really would weep if I could—I know it would be very proper. But I can't—for I wept so immensely at the time that

Henry broke his collar-bone, that, upon my honour, *I have not one tear left* at present—so, sister, you'll excuse me.' "

"And what did your aunt Mortimer say?"

"Sweet, amiable old creature! she never makes a severe reply to any person. When lady Dalton's back was turned, she just glanced at me, and tapped her forehead, saying, 'Too much talent—too much talent—Ah, poor thing, I fear all is not quite right *there*—be very guarded, Flora, love; for I fear she will be too much occupied by her literary avocations to pay you the attention she ought.' And then aunt Mortimer kissed me."

"*Et puis?*"

"And gave me fifty pounds to amuse myself."

"Then probably *you* wept at parting?"

"No, I assure you, master Malcolm; I was far more inclined to laugh. I don't at all consider the acquisition of fifty pounds a weeping matter."

The following day we passed several hours

in the extensive gardens of the chateau, which were scrupulously preserved from change or innovation, in the antique style of formal symmetry of which our modern gardeners are generally too negligent. In the midst of a large parterre which was surrounded by a sloping bank of verdant turf, a magnificent jet-d'eau threw its sparkling column of water to a height of nearly fifty feet. Beyond the bank of turf was a tall myrtle hedge, trained and clipped with a scrupulous exactness which might have elicited the approbation of even the Abbé Gayôt, that energetic champion of horticultural symmetry. Here, upon the velvet grass, the marquis, his daughter, and their royal visitor carelessly sat, while Macho Valgiaz, a sunburnt Catalan, brought us nectarines, oranges, and grapes.

"Now," said Flora, archly, and drawing a basket to herself, "we will divide—you shall have all the purple grapes, and I will have all the green ones." I could not avoid smiling at the roguish glance that accompanied this inti-

mation, for the green grapes were by far the most abundant.

"Oh, Malcolm," said lady Dalton, who was on this day superfluously officious in all the duties she conceived to appertain to her office of chaperone, "do not allow Flora to eat a single grape, I beg—I assure you she is not permitted to taste fruit. Don't, Flora, love; you know how uneasy it makes me."

Poor Flora cast a tragi-comic glance at me, which seemed to say, "Pity me for having to submit to my excellent aunt's most annoying precautions!" I was mischievous enough to hold up a tantalizing bunch of green grapes. "Yes," said Flora, with a sigh of resignation, "they are all green grapes to *me*, for I must not taste one of them."

It was just the same at dinner; whatever Flora expressed a wish to have, was immediately subjected to the criticism, and probably to the interdiction, of her tormentor. Potage—poisson—sauté—salmi—consommé—croquette—it was all alike. "My love, you must be

very, *very* cautious—remember, you have been committed to my care—I feel myself answerable, really—you know, love, that Abernethy says *this* is unwholesome, and *that* is inflammatory, and the other is indigestible—Flora, dearest, do not sport with my responsibility—that's a love."

The most provoking part of the affair, was the self-denying, enterprising fearlessness, with which her ladyship herself devoured every thing that she denounced as being absolutely poisonous for Flora.

"I told you," said Flora, "the kind of chaperone to whose freaks I was condemned."

Flora was determined to take ample revenge on her aunt. "I shall have fifty ways of teasing the fat creature," said she. And deeming the personal vanity of lady Dalton her most vulnerable point, the mischievous young lady attacked her in a variety of ways, direct and indirect. For example, she got Henri de Blasis, the marquis's nephew, to engage lady Dalton in a spirited game of battledore and

shuttlecock on a scorching autumn day, by complimenting her ladyship on the fawn-like grace which the attitudes of battledore are particularly calculated to display. And then when the poor woman was fairly blown, through Henri's intentional awkwardness, and broiled. puffed, and panted in her efforts to catch the shuttlecock, Flora would mischievously recommend her to refit her appearance at a mirror. And the faithful glass displayed, even to the partial eyes of lady Dalton, the melancholy truth that prudence required, for the future, the selection of some less attitudinizing game.

Again, when it was proposed to extend our tour to the castle of monsieur Du Bois among the Pyrenees, Flora informed lady Dalton that Du Bois was heard to say that he should deem it necessary to enlarge his doorways, if her ladyship intended to visit his chateau.

Another day, lady Dalton asked the lively maiden what the count de Bourval thought of her appearance waltzing.

"Don't ask me, aunt," said Flora.

"Why not ask you? I insist on hearing."

"Well, ma'am, I have heard that he says that your rapid gyrations remind him of a balloon in a whirlwind."

"Well, I acknowledge the justice of the comparison. The movements of a balloon are always considered majestic. But that little creature, Barillac, with whom I waltzed—he knows nothing of waltzing—what did Bourval think of *him?*"

"We did not see him at all, ma'am—he was quite invisible the whole time."

"Invisible!"

"Yes: you overshadowed him by nearly a head, and his person was wholly enveloped in your fluttering drapery. You were cruel, aunt, to conceal a little creature so extremely desirous for display."

"Flora," said lady Dalton, reddening, "you are very impertinent."

"Surely, aunt, all the world knows you are not a dwarf; and the count says that magnitude is a quality of the sublime, and that the

expansion of a form such as yours, is merely the expansion of enchantment. You would certainly make half a dozen of Barillac," added Flora, scanning the dimensions of her aunt with an eye of critical measurement.

I could not but smile at the mischievous adroitness in teasing which Flora displayed. She never failed to hit the sore point.

"How can you be so ill-natured?" I asked her one day.

"I am not ill-natured," answered Flora; "but my aunt never spared me, and therefore has no claim on my forbearance. And pray take care, master Malcolm, how you criticise my actions, or I shall be grievously tempted to turn my teasing abilities against yourself."

This timely caution from the lips of the imperious damsel compelled me to observe a prudent silence.

In thus making public miss Flora's machinations against the peace of lady Dalton, I do not apprehend the displeasure of her ladyship; for her prospects will remain unin-

jured, as she succeeded about two years since in exchanging her widowed lozenge for the coronet of a duchess, having married an Italian duca of shattered fortunes and appalling eyebrows, who was supposed to have poisoned his first wife.

CHAPTER III.

A NOCTURNAL ADVENTURE.

When the "gay and courtly throng" were again assembled in the castle, the remainder of the evening was enlivened with the charms of music. Lady Dalton was requested to accompany her voice with the lute, but in vain; her ill-humour continued predominant. The count D'Artois retired rather early, and his departure was the signal for a general dispersion of the company.

I threw myself on the bed in my apartment, and fell into that drowsy state between sleeping and waking which presents all the fanciful visions of slumber, while it leaves us indistinctly conscious of the surrounding localities. Forms of brightness and beauty seemed to flit

before my eyes—I floated in the mazes of the waltz with Flora Douglas—lamps diffused a mellowed radiance through the lofty suites of marble halls, and fragrance was wafted from the airy and fantastic drapery of the beauteous girls whose graceful and capricious movements formed the principal attraction of the scene. Then a mist appeared to hover overhead—it thickened—the lamps became dull—the forms of fairy grace seemed to change into wrinkled hags arrayed in grave-clothes; the aromatic scents around were displaced by a charnel stench, and the darkened halls assumed the appearance of sepulchral vaults, whose vast expanse was lost in obscurity.

Appalled by this dismal vision, I started from my slumber, and looked around—narrow slips of moonlight entered through the casement, whose shutters and curtains were unclosed. I turned from the light and tried to sleep once more, but in vain. In this state I remained for about a quarter of an hour, with my eyes vacantly fixed upon the large dark

chimney, in which a few faggots were heaped. I heard a slight noise, which seemed to proceed from some part of the room ; I gently rose and leaned on my elbow, reconnoitring as well as that slight change of posture permitted. All was again silent for a while, but in some minutes the noise was repeated. Gazing with anxious intentness on the chimney, I imagined that I saw a human form descending its dark arch, and standing on the faggots. I remained perfectly quiet, attentively watching the movements of my visitor ; he stealthily emerged from the chimney, and paused for a while upon the hearth gazing steadily at the bed. In his hand was some weapon, which seemed to be a couteau de chasse. At length he stepped over to the bed: I continued to counterfeit sleep, both in order to watch his motions unsuspected, and to secure the advantage of surprise in a struggle, should such become necessary. He gently raised the lower curtain, so as to let the moonlight beam upon my face. After he had reconnoitred my appearance for

some moments, he let the curtain fall, and reentered his place of concealment with the same tiptoe caution he had previously observed. I mused in wonder at the visit of this singular and mysterious personage—I tormented myself with vain efforts to conjecture the motive that could have led him to intrude on my repose at that dead hour, and by so strange a mode of entrance. I rose from my bed, and seizing a pistol which lay on the table, I silently crept to the hearth, and throwing around me a cloak, listened attentively for any sounds that might tend to elucidate the mystery. I bent my head beneath the chimney arch, and heard the sound of footsteps, which led me to conclude there was a private stair concealed within the flue. My faculties were absorbed in a throbbing agony of attention, and ere long, a voice whispered in the provincial patois of Gascony,—

"It was not the count D'Artois' bed-room. I lifted up the bed-curtain, and saw none there save a smock-faced stripling."

"Perhaps the stripling may have heard thee, Pierrot," said another voice; "'twere well to secure him."

"No," replied Pierrot; "the younker slept too soundly for that—I scanned him well by the moonbeams, I promise thee; he could never have lain so still unless he was asleep."

"It were safer to make sure of him, though," rejoined the other speaker,—"'tis possible he *may* have seen thee and lain quiet; it is but bearing him hither from his nest, and no one knows aught of his fate. It would be an awkward job if he should sing."

"I tell thee there is no fear of that," said Pierrot; "the stripling was soundly asleep. But Bernardin must have sent thee astray, when he told thee this stair opened on the chimney of the count D'Artois' chamber."

"Nay," rejoined the other voice, "I remember that Bernardin said somewhat of a low doorway between the flues, and mayhap we should have turned in through it; I felt it not as we passed, but let us seek it now."

"Where is the lamp?" asked Pierrot.

"I left it on the stair of the tower door," replied his comrade.

"Go, fetch it then," said Pierrot; "for this place is too dark to find one's way without it; I nearly fell from the steps upon the faggots in yonder stripling's chimney, and I had assuredly awakened him if I had stumbled. As it was, I made some noise. Go, sirrah—fetch the lamp."

Accordingly the companion of Pierrot re-ascended the stair for the lamp, and with its assistance they sought the low archway which connected the flues, and led to the chamber of the count.

As they evidently harboured some design against his life, I quitted my apartment and knocked loudly at the door of his dormitory, which was the next in the range to my own.

"Qui frappe?" demanded the count, wakened by the noise I made.

"Malcolm Hay," I answered; "your royal

highness's life is attempted! Open to me, or you will be assassinated!"

The count got up and summoned two attendants from an antechamber. They rose noiselessly, and took their stations in the count's apartment.

His royal highness admitted me, and desired me to stand near the chimney, where a fire had been lighted in the evening, but it was now reduced to a few decaying embers. I told him in whispered accents all I knew of the threatened danger, after which some anxious minutes passed in total silence.

"Perhaps," said the count, in a very low voice, "they heard the noise you made knocking at the door, and have relinquished their design, apprehensive of meeting resistance."

I was rather inclined to think so myself, until after the lapse of some minutes the sound of footsteps in the chimney became audible, and Pierrot descended with great caution. I could not account for his not having heard the

noise I made at the count's door, except by supposing that in trying to discover the passage which connected the flues, he had ascended so high up the secret stair as to have gone beyond the reach of the sounds. While the thought passed through my mind, Pierrot placed his feet upon the grate, and quietly stole forth upon the hearthstone. He was proceeding to the bed with the same stealthy pace, when the attendants and I sprang upon him, disarmed him, and forced a gag into his mouth to prevent him from alarming his companion. He was of prodigious personal strength, and had nearly proved too many for us; and it required the utmost exertions of the attendants, who were both able fellows, to master him. We led him into the antechamber, closed the door, and removed the gag from his mouth, while the comte D'Artois questioned him as to the motives which had led him to seek his apartment at that hour. For a long time the ruffian was stubbornly silent, and seemed wholly im-

penetrable both to threat and expostulation. All he uttered was the sullen exclamation, "Bernardin m'a trahi!" At length, with a desperation of insolence almost incredible, he replied to the count's reiterated inquiries, "I came here, Charles of Artois, to rid the world of thee!" This declaration elicited an exclamation of horror from the two attendants, who said in a breath, "So please your royal highness, we will put the villain to death."

"Nay," said the count, "the wretched man is evidently insane—slay him not; we will have him to the galleys. And what could have induced thee to meditate so dark a deed?" he said, turning again to the miscreant.

"Because thou art a Bourbon," replied the assassin, with a stern voice, "and therefore a tyrant in thy heart; and I should account that *he* did France the best service who should remove from the earth the greatest number of thy hated race."

"Who employed thee to commit this deed?"

said the count, quite calmly; "such as thou, are, in general, the subordinate agents in attempts against princes."

But on this point the man was impenetrable.

The count had great difficulty in repressing the ardent desire of his attendants to wreak instantaneous vengeance upon Pierrot. He *did*, however, prevail; and commanding them to keep strict guard on the ruffian, he quitted the anteroom to strike a light, and to search for cords to bind him. But Pierrot, freeing himself from the grasp of his guards, by a sudden and desperate exertion of strength, darted through the door of the count's dormitory ere we had recovered from the surprise into which his sudden escapade had thrown us. I snapped my pistol at his vanishing figure, but, unluckily, it missed fire, and the miscreant was ensconced in sooty security before the count had struck the light. The lamp, however, was at length lighted, and the count's attendants and I ascended the private stair concealed within the flue, until our progress was stopped

by a small iron door, which we vainly endeavoured to open. Through this we concluded that Pierrot and his accomplice had escaped, and finding our pursuit thus rendered ineffectual, we returned to the chamber of the count.

Meurthier, one of the attendants, remembered that an old servant of the chateau was named Bernardin, and as the words of Pierrot, "Bernardin m'a trahi," seemed to mark that person as an accomplice, the count deemed it right to alarm the household and have him immediately taken into custody.

For this purpose Meurthier sought forthwith the apartment of the seneschal. When the attempt on the life of the count D'Artois was made known to that officer, he instantly arose, and accompanied Meurthier to Bernardin's chamber, at the door of which they knocked loudly, but obtained no answer.

"This looks ill," said the seneschal, trying to open the door; "Bernardin cannot but have heard us. Hola ho! monsieur Bernardin!" he added; "open to us if you be a man!"

But Bernardin still remained silent. The seneschal looked through the keyhole. "There is no key in the door," said he; "we must force it." But some time elapsed ere this could be accomplished, and Meurthier waited impatiently, keeping guard at the door, until the seneschal returned with the necessary implements. The door was at last forced, and Bernardin appeared within, pale and shivering; his eyes glassy and staring, and his whole appearance evincing that he suffered from a violent paroxysm of terror.

"Ho, monsieur Bernardin," said the seneschal, "why did you not admit us when we knocked?"

"I—I—heard you not," stammered Bernardin.

"Thou liest!" replied the seneschal; "thou didst hear us — our knocking might have aroused even the dead. Thou art not wont to be so dull of hearing."

The affrighted Bernardin sank down upon

his bed, for he trembled so violently that he was not able to stand.

"You must come with us," continued the seneschal, assisting Meurthier to convey the trembling villain from his chamber; "you must come with us to the presence of my lord the marquis—your judgment rests with his lordship. White-livered rascal! you do not possess even courage, but are as mean a coward as thou art a treacherous ruffian!" Bernardin did not attempt an answer, but suffered himself to be led, or rather dragged, to the hall of the castle, where Meurthier was left to prevent his escape.

The seneschal, in his first effervescence of wrath, betook himself to his master's chamber; but when he had arrived at the door, he reflected that it would be more prudent, considering the marquis's great age, not to arouse him from his slumber with a startling tale of midnight murderers, but to wait until the following day, when the purposes of justice

could be quite as well attained. He therefore returned to the hall, and remanded Bernardin to his apartment, where a sentinel was placed to keep watch on him till morning. He then proceeded to the count D'Artois, in order to inform his royal highness of the capture of Bernardin. The count commended his exertions, and after his departure, again retired to repose. The chateau was perfectly quiet the remainder of the night.

The following morning, Bernardin appeared so totally unnerved from terror, that rational answers could not be extracted from him. He broke forth into incoherent exclamations, from which we gathered that he had reckoned with perfect security on the success of the assassin Pierrot, who, it also appeared, had given him a pecuniary recompense for showing him the private passage to the count D'Artois' apartment. Bernardin had quite overlooked the possibility of Pierrot's mistaking the passage, or it is probable he would have had the prudence to obviate by timely flight all danger

of the discovery of the part he had taken in the foul attempt. The marquis of Blasis would have hanged him without judge or jury, but the count D'Artois interfered to change his destination to the galleys, where, for aught I know, he is now toiling out the weary remainder of his life. The good old marquis implored all his guests not to mention the circumstance, as his feelings of loyalty were severely wounded at its having occurred beneath his roof; nor should it now have a place in my narrative, if its disclosure could give him pain or sorrow. But death has removed him from the region of such cares; I learned that he died last year at the venerable age of ninety-three.

CHAPTER IV.

A ROYAL DEATH.—I QUIT FRANCE AND RETURN TO ENGLAND.—AN ENGLISH ADVENTURE.—AN INHOSPITABLE MAITRE D'HOTEL.—STORY-TELLING IN PECULIAR CIRCUMSTANCES.

THE following day we quitted the hospitable mansion of the Bourvals. The royal party also took their departure; and shortly before entering our carriages, the comte d'Artois took me aside, and said, "Mon jeune Ecossois, you have placed me under an obligation which nothing can sufficiently repay. Will you, my dear young friend, enter into my service, and accept a confidential appointment in my household? Your fortunes shall be my most particular care."

I declined his royal highness's offer with

respectful gratitude. "Eh bien," said he, "if I ever can assist you, I intreat you may command my good offices." I promised to do so—whether I subsequently kept that promise, will appear in the course of this narrative.

We set out. Our carriages had not proceeded a league, when we were met by an express from Paris, who came to hasten the return of the count D'Artois to the capital, as the increasing debility of king Louis rendered it highly improbable that his majesty could live many days. This intelligence was rather unexpected. Count D'Artois accordingly hastened to Paris, and the relative with whom I travelled, was compelled by a domestic loss to proceed to England. Ere we departed from France, I endeavoured to elicit from Flora an avowal that I was not wholly indifferent to her; but the damsel was unusually coy and reserved.

When great folks die, great bells are tolled, and great guns are fired; in order that if the awful change be destitute of heavenly hope,

it may at least possess all the comfort and éclat that the jangling of rusty iron and the explosion of gunpowder are able to impart.

We left Paris in September 1824, amidst the boomings of the minute guns that announced to the sorrowing community that king Louis had vacated his *earthly* throne for his successor. The external face of things was lugubrious enough ; the flags were half mast high, and the people wore mourning.

We hastened to Havre, where we purposed to embark for Southampton. Our voyage was prosperous and rapid. As soon as we touched English ground my travelling companions proceeded to their respective destinations, and I was left to pursue my way to Scotland alone. Adventures on the road are not now as frequent or as interesting as before the establishment of mail coaches contributed so materially to the safety and convenience of travelling ; I encountered an incident, however, which, if properly embellished, and

thrown back to a century since, might make a pretty respectable figure in a novel.

Desirous to take my own time in travelling homewards, I purchased a horse at Southampton; which town I left on the following morning, intending to ride northwards by easy stages. My new purchase was a pretty good roadster, a sound, flippant, sure-footed bit of blood, and ere I had proceeded a mile, I warmly congratulated myself on the independent feeling of being exempted from the tyranny of coach hours, and the tedium of troublesome travelling companions. I enjoyed much exhilaration of spirits, which was greatly enhanced by the beauty of the weather on the first day's journey. On the second day, however, just as I had reached the northern confines of the shire, the atmosphere became clouded, and torrents of rain began to fall. Hastening my pace, I soon arrived at a solitary inn in the midst of a district which had evidently once been wooded, and even still exhibited a park-

like appearance, from the occasional masses of timber and large single trees that were scattered through the fields. The roads were now quite flooded in several places, and the violence of the rain appeared to increase every moment. I spurred my nag into the inn yard, surrendered him to an hostler, and entering the house, proceeded to exchange my drenched habiliments for dry clothes.

As soon as I had made myself thoroughly comfortable, I began to examine the house; which indeed presented much to excite a stranger's curiosity and interest. It was very old, and seemed to belong to the era of Elizabeth, from the heavy shafted windows, the elaborately ornamented freestone chimney-pieces, the antique and curious ceilings, and the rich oak wainscots. I found on inquiry that it had formerly belonged to an ancient and wealthy family, the principal member of which had been attainted in 1746; when the mansion and surrounding property passed into the hands of a citizen whose descendants had

ruined themselves by extravagance. It was then sold; in the course of time the park was broken up into farms, and the public road brought close to the door; the present possessor rented it for a limited number of years, and converted it into an inn; an occupation with which I was not on the present occasion much disposed to find fault, however different it might be from the purposes of the original founder.

About four in the afternoon the weather cleared, and as it was a *broken day*, the neighbouring peasants did not think fit to resume their usual labours, but collected in large numbers in a field near the house to try their skill in athletic pastimes, such as running, wrestling, leaping, &c. Our landlord (whose name was Ambrose) looked on with an appearance of good humoured interest. The sports lasted until dark, and he then invited a party of the peasantry to spend the evening in his kitchen, where the time passed in chat concerning the local affairs of the neighbourhood, till supper appeared in the shape of a

substantial meal of cheese, bacon, bread and beer, with a liberal supply of pipes and tobacco, for all who chose to smoke. I joined the jovial group, although I had not received a formal invitation from mine host. I amused myself observing their provincial dialect and manners, and I contributed much to their hilarity by narrating certain bizarre adventures, partly real, partly fabricated for the occasion, of which I represented myself as having been the hero.

At length the night wore late, the guests departed to their homes, and I was conducted by the landlord through several long passages to my bedroom. It was a large gloomy apartment, the walls of which were partly wainscoted, and hung with pictures, so stained from time and damp that the subjects were hardly discernible, while the canvas occasionally shivered in the dark old oaken frames, as a stream of wind would enter through the chinks of the ill fitted casements.

Mine host having led me to my dormitory, set down the candle and departed. In the course of half an hour I retired to bed; but I had no sooner lain down than I rose from the bed, which was not merely damp but wet—so wet that one might think it had not been aired for the best part of a century. Unwilling to give trouble, or to waken the people of the house, who I was certain had ere this time retired to repose; and also doubting much whether I could have made my way through the intricate passages that led to my apartment, I replaced the bed-clothes, and wrapping myself comfortably up in my riding cloak, lay down upon the bed, and endeavoured to sleep. A quarter of an hour passed, and I was just sinking into a dreamy slumber, when the door of my room was opened, a female figure entered upon tiptoe, and silently removed the candle which I had left lighted on my table. As she repassed the bed, I suddenly started up, threw open the curtains,

and desired her to replace the candle, adding that I never slept in a strange inn without burning a light in my apartment.

The lady answered not, but proceeded more rapidly to remove the light; I sprang from the bed and followed her through the corridors, until we reached the kitchen; she had half a minute's advantage of me in the race, from her superior acquaintance with the irregular flooring of the passages, over which I stumbled two or three times.

She had made good use of this short interval by alarming Mr. Ambrose, the host, who stood with his arms a-kimbo and his back to the fire, which still blazed brightly. He stared at me with a mingled expression of ferocity and terror, and seemed collecting his determination. As he spoke not for some moments, I broke silence by saying that I had left a light burning in my room, which the lady removed against my will, and that I now was come to recover it, and also to request they would give me a dry bed, as the sheets were so wet

that I was obliged to sleep in my day-clothes and cloak.

"Damn the bed thou shalt have in my house," said Ambrose, gruffly.

"Why, this is most extraordinary conduct, Mr. Ambrose. I say, let me have a dry bed at once—I'm confoundedly tired."

"Zir, you shall troop out o' my house, bag and baggage. You've froighted this here woife o' mine out of her seven wits. She zaw the loight a-burning in your room, and she didn't know but what you moight set the house a-foire. Zoa she goes up to take away the condle, and what does she foind but my gem'man with all a's clothes on at that hour o' noight, and ready to jump up at any moment's warning. Zooks! noa lodgers sleep in my house, that wear their coats and breeches a-bed o' noights. How do I know but what you've got a gang o' robbers outside, ready to break into the house at a whistle, and to cut all our throats? And to deal plainly and squarely, Joe Hodges, the hostler, zays you're

woundily loik Skyflying Wat, the pickpocket, that broke prison at Carlisle last summer twelvemonth. Zoa, the long and short o't is—troop out o' my house, holus bolus, for I'm domned if such a suspicious varmint sleeps a noight in 't."

During this eloquent harangue, Mrs. Ambrose had slunk out of the kitchen in manifest terror. I did not at all relish quitting my quarters, for the rain had recommenced with great violence, and the storm howled awfully without.

"Mr. Ambrose," said I, "I am really astonished at your entertaining such a ridiculous fancy for a moment. I told you that the reason I wore my clothes, was because the bed was wet."

"Then, domn it!" interrupted mine host, "whoy didn't you come and ax for a dry one at once?"

"Because I was sure you had all gone to bed, and I didn't think I could find my way through all your confounded long passages."

"All gammon!" said the landlord, with an incredulous sneer. In short, the notion of my being the captain of a gang had taken full possession of his mind, and I found it utterly impossible to disabuse him. He repeated his marching orders, and threatened to turn me out *vi et armis*, in case of resistance.

"Now, as to threats, Mr. Ambrose, I don't value them a pin; and I would have you recollect, that if you expel me your house on this unwarrantable fancy, you incur a legal penalty. Your house is a house of public entertainment, from which you have not any right to expel a lodger unless his conduct be dishonest or disorderly; and if you persist in your singular course, I fairly warn you, I shall take a legal remedy."

"Domn the rush I care for you or your law —troop 's the word, and if you doan't——Here, Joe Hodges!" (raising his voice,) "come, help me to tumble out this here gem'man, neck and heels, since he won't stir by fair means."

At this summons, Joe Hodges, a shaggy-

looking animal, protruded a shock-head from behind a partition, and presently afterwards shambled forth and stood in the midst of the kitchen, awaiting the further commands of mine host, who still remained with his arms a-kimbo, in an attitude of defiance and impatience.

I began to reflect that their forces were two to one stronger than mine, and that in case they should proceed to extremities, resistance would be wholly unavailing, so I thought it best to temporize.

"Well, Mr. Ambrose, I see you're obstinate, so there isn't any use in opposing you. But the next town, I believe, is seven miles away, and I don't know the road—you must find me a guide.—Joe Hodges, bring my nag from the stable."

"Run, Joe," said Ambrose, delighted to find me so compliant.

Joe vanished, and the nag was saddled, standing at the door of the kitchen porch in two minutes. I had resolved on my manœuvre

in the interim, and seizing the bridle, led my steed into the kitchen before they were aware of my intention. I then sprang into the saddle, and touching the animal's back beneath the pommel, he flung out his hind legs with such sudden vigour as made Ambrose and Joe run into a corner to escape being kicked.

"Now, my worthy and hospitable host," said I, "till my horse came in, you were two to one against me. Now, to use an Irish phrase, the odds are even—or, more properly speaking, I am three to two, for the deuce is in it if my horse is not worth the pair of you. He has got a handy trick of kicking with unerring aim when his back is tickled by his rider, and if you provoke me by any further insolence I shall introduce his hoofs to you instanter."

At this moment the nag began to neigh, just as if to confirm my statement.

"Do you hear him, Mr. Ambrose? he says he'll play his part if you put him to it. Now, sir, I will make a child's bargain with you. Do not molest me, and I shall stay here quietly

all night. All I ask you for is shelter. Do you hear how the storm howls and the rain dashes? Could you have the heart to turn me out such a night, in a strange neighbourhood? Since you *do* entertain the ridiculous fears with which your worthy wife has infected you, I shall only ask to remain on the back of my horse in this snug warm kitchen till daylight. Let Joe put down more coals and make the fire blaze, and you both may sit up and watch me if you like—I sha'n't object to such good company."

The landlord muttered something of my promise to quit the house if furnished with a guide.

"Well, landlord, will either you or Joe procure me one?"

"There 's widow Rankin's son at the end o' the lane would be main glad of the job," said Joe, "that is, an' the gem'man would *pay* him well."

"Well, Joe, will you run and fetch master Rankin?" said I.

But Joe and the landlord both demurred to this proposal, which the reader will easily believe that I did not make seriously. The landlord reflected that if Joe should quit the house, he would himself be left alone with me and my formidable steed, a prospect that he did not much relish. And Joe bethought him that the night was none of the pleasantest for a trip of nearly a mile, to say nothing of the awful chance of being waylaid in the environs of the inn by my suppositious gang of robbers. So both Joe and the landlord arrived at the conclusion, that it was best to remain as they were; and to add confirmation to this sage resolve, I made my nag execute sundry capers and caprioles, to remind them of his readiness for action.

At length the landlord's surly English obstinacy gave way so far, that he burst into a loud horse laugh at the absurdity of our situation.

"D—n yourself and your horse," he exclaimed, "you 're a main impudent pair, as

ever crossed my threshold. Prithee, art an Irishman, friend?"

"No, indeed; I never was in Ireland in my life."

"Whoy, I thought as how you might be an Irisher from your comical impudence. But you bean't an Englishman, any way?"

"No—I am a Scotchman."

"A domn'd sharking set, those Scotch fellows are! Hark ye, friend, how long dost mean to block up my kitchen and keep me out o' my bed in this here outrageous way?"

"It 's all your own fault, landlord. You would have been snugly in bed long ago if you had not thought proper to treat me in this monstrous and inhospitable manner. Honesty, they say, is the best policy—I'm sure you must confess that common civility would not have been your own worst policy to-night. You 've lost your night's rest and gained nothing in return for it. You 've also lost the price of my bed, for I promise you I don't mean to pay for a bed I did not sleep in."

"Hum—some people say as how honesty is the best policy—I can't say, however, that I 've always found it soa myself."

"How is that, landlord?"

"Thereby hangs a tale, Mr. Scotchman."

"Well, let us hear the tale, landlord, if it be a good one. Why, man, since your mad humour keeps us out of our beds all night, I don't see how we can make the time pass better than by telling stories."

The landlord paused a while, as if doubting whether it would not be too great a relaxation from his obstinate dignity to comply with my request. At length, however, his muscles were thawed into a grin, and looking hard at me, he said,

"Well, hang it, Mr. Highwayman or Pickpocket, (an' so be as how you *are* on the account,) I can't deny but what you're a clever pleasant fellow enough, and since it's my mishap to be pent up with you here like a springed woodcock, whoy, I may as well

tell you my tale. You must know, then, I was once upon a time in the army, and I served under Wellington in Spain and Portugal—whoy, man, I was a serjeant in the —th regiment, and did wonders of valour at Vimeira—but that 's not what I want to talk about. It chanced on a time that myself and a party of our men were passing through Estremadura; the day was broiling hot, and we stopped on our march to rest and eat summat, in one o' their domned posadas. The wine was main good, and the host chalked the number of bottles he gave us, on the back of the door. When we finished the bottles the men roared for more, and when the donkey of a landlord turned his back to get them, the men rubbed out a power o' the chalk marks. Zoa the host was bilked of his roightful pay, in spite of all I could say to our fellows, for *I* was noa party to the roguery, I promise you. Well, I didn't loik that the poor foreign fool of a landlord should be robbed by British

sojers, zoa I e'en waited till our party had left the posada, to pay him the difference out of my own pocket. Zir, the mortal minute the Spanish scoundrel got me alone, he whistled in a parcel of tawny blackguards, and they set to work to thrash me till my bones were as soft as bean straw. I kept bawling to the fellows that it was not I who had rubbed away the chalk marks, and that I stayed to pay for the wine the sojers drank, but nought would convince 'em—for curse the word o' christian English did the Spanish asses understond, and I never was able to master a mouthful o' their domned outlandish gibberish. Zoa, for want of understanding each other, I got a right good-milling, and I moight have been killed, an a grave Don with a black plume o' feathers hadn't saved me in the nick o' time.—Tell me after *that*, that honesty is the best policy. Whoy, all I got for my honesty was to have my bones pounded to a jelly. Noa, zir—too much honesty is the

worst of any poor devil's play in *this* world, whatever it may do in the next."

When mine host had fairly got into a story-telling humour, the night passed pleasantly enough; for my attention was kept alive by the whimsical novelty of my situation, as well as by the piquancy of some of his stories; for he had been a good deal in the continental wars, and had brought away anecdotes of most of the distinguished officers. In short, we soon got into amicable terms with each other; he still persisting in the belief that I was a highwayman, and I thinking that he was an obstinate, capricious, and inhospitable mule. However, we chatted away with as much cordiality as consisted with our not very flattering opinions of each other; and when morning dawned, I resumed my journey after the refreshment of a substantial breakfast.

I arrived without further adventure in Scotland.

My story is now to overleap a period of six

years, during which I continued to reside at Tullycraigie.

Flora remained on the continent during this interval.

CHAPTER V.

I MEET AN OLD FRIEND, TO WHOM FORTUNE HATH BEEN SOMEWHAT UNPROPITIOUS.

At the time that the arrival of Charles X. at Holyrood, was publicly announced, it happened that my father was called on private business to the Scottish metropolis.

"You must accompany me," he said to me; "I will go to Holyrood—you must present me at the court of king Charles: I long to assure him that there exists at least *one* Scotchman in this levelling age who regards his cause as it *should* be regarded,—who mourns his expulsion from his native kingdom as an act of rebellious atrocity, notwithstanding the noisy ostentation of our public meetings to con-

gratulate the French on their blessed acquisition of Louis Philippe. I long to show his majesty that there is *one* true Scottish heart that sympathises in his wrongs."

The evening of the following day I found myself walking in the great quadrangle of the palace of Holyrood. Inquisitive crowds had thronged the space all day, in the hope of obtaining a view of the king. His majesty still suffered from the fatigue of his recent journey from England, and could ill bear the idle gaze of multitudes. He remained in the royal apartments until sunset, when the crowd at length dispersed. The usual order was given to close the palace gates, and a soldier respectfully desired me to quit the palace yard. I replied that I slept in the apartments of colonel N * * * * *, and did not intend to go out. The gates were accordingly closed, and I still continued to perambulate the court.

The moon had now risen, and the ancient mass of buildings which the royal exiles occupied, threw their sable shadow on the ground.

I thought I discerned a figure standing within a low browed postern which was deeply sunk in shade. Without appearing to observe it, I continued to watch its motions, and beheld it emerge from the postern and take several turns on the darkened side of the quadrangle. After the lapse of several minutes I approached, and walked repeatedly along the same side of the square, so as to meet the figure each time about the centre of the range.

I soon became aware that the perambulist was no other than the exiled king. He often sighed deeply as we passed each other, and was evidently wrapped in painful rumination on his fallen fortunes. I mentally debated whether I should make myself known to him, or wait until the following day. Sometimes I thought that any efforts to attract his attention might wear the appearance of intrusion, and perhaps be ill received; and again, I considered it not wholly improbable that the voice of a grateful sympathetic friend, however humble, might tend to soothe the royal sufferer's

mind. The latter consideration prevailed. The next time he turned on his walk, I knelt to him as he passed me. He paused in surprise, not expecting this manifestation of homage.

"Who are you, young man?" demanded the king.

"I am Malcolm Hay, your majesty. I do not wonder that your majesty should forget me."

"Malcolm Hay!" repeated the king, "Malcolm Hay—pardon me, monsieur Hay, but I have not the happiness to recollect you."

"Does not your majesty remember the young Malcolm Hay, who had the honour to meet you at the chateau de Blasis, the year that you ascended the throne? He is now at your feet, beseeching your majesty to accept graciously his humble assurances of fidelity and gratitude."

"Ah, mon cher ami, Malcolm—*mon jeune Ecossois*—I remember—I remember!" exclaimed the king, embracing me, as he raised me from the ground. "How much am I af-

fected by your recollection of that period! I would have served you if I could, but you quitted France and would not permit me. Perhaps you acted wisely after all, but my offers were meant for your benefit. Come,—we will take some turns in this court. I should wish to talk over past days," he added, with a sigh; "they were happier, at least, than the present, and, perhaps, than the future."

"Sire," said I, "we must hope for the best. There are many noble, loyal, and devoted souls in the south of France, and much will depend on their exertions."

"Yes," replied the monarch, "but the day is yet far distant when these exertions can possibly avail; it will be long, I fear, ere the mass of Frenchmen can be cured of their infatuation. Ah, Malcolm! prospects were brighter when I mounted the throne of France—and, politics apart, I cannot but express my regret once more that you did not allow me to take charge of your fortunes. Your rise had been speedy,

and you might have taken flight from our luckless court ere the evil day of its downfall."

"Your majesty wrongs me," I replied, "in supposing me capable of basking in your sunshine, and deserting you in the day of your adversity. And since you are graciously pleased to regret that I did not *then* enter your service, perhaps your majesty will permit me to assure you that there is a way in which you can confer a more acceptable benefit upon me, than you could have done in the hour of your prosperity."

"Name it, my young friend," said the king, "and I shall be delighted to comply with your request."

"Then, sire," said I, "allow me *now* to enter your service; permit me to fill some office in your court. I shall be amply rewarded by being near the person of so kind and gracious a monarch."

His majesty smiled mournfully. "Alas!" said he, "my court is now but a small one—yet if

honours and riches are no longer the guerdon of my friends and adherents, they will still enjoy the higher recompense of approving consciences, and the thanks of a grateful, though unfortunate master. Yes, dear Malcolm, I accept your proposal with pleasure. You shall enter my service, and Heaven knows, I could have hardly had a more acceptable offer, for I grievously lack friends. Dupierre is endeavouring to excite a loyal spirit in the western provinces, but hitherto without avail. He works with great caution, but I fear his zeal will endanger him."

CHAPTER VI.

THE COTERIE OF ROYAL EXILES.—A MESSENGER FROM FRANCE.—I MEET AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE, WHOSE RECEPTION OF ME IS NOT VERY CORDIAL.

THE king invited me to enter the palace. I followed his majesty into the large apartment opening from the portrait gallery, where the unfortunate Charles Edward held his levées during his brief hour of success in the memorable struggle of 1745. The room had a gloomy and desolate appearance. The duchess of Berri was seated at a small table, and turned over the leaves of a book which she held. But the volume, apparently, excited little interest, for her eye rambled listlessly over the page, and ever and anon a half suppressed sigh evinced that her thoughts were engaged on the eventful fortunes of her beloved France.

"This is your old friend, Malcolm Hay, madame," said the king, as he presented me to her royal highness. A kind smile of welcome enlivened her face, as she said, "I rejoice to see you again, M. Hay, although I cannot but regret that it is under such unfavourable circumstances."

"Monsieur Hay," said the king, "has entered my service, and with rare and chivalrous devotion has offered to unite his fortunes with ours."

"I heartily thank him," replied the duchess, "for his generous devotion to a cause, which at present, alas! has nothing, save its justice, to recommend it."

"Where is madame d'Angoulême?" asked the king.

"At vespers, I believe, but I imagine she will shortly re-appear."

The door soon opened, and the duchess of Angoulême entered, accompanied by the duke, the archbishop of Rheims, and the son of the duke de Guiche, a handsome lad, about the age

of the duke de Bordeaux. But the splendour of their royal, noble, and archiepiscopal dignities was lost upon me, when I saw that the duchess was supported on the arm of——Flora Douglas!

The king perceived the confused astonishment my countenance betrayed, and said, with a good natured smile,

"It is easy to see, monsieur Malcolm, which of this fair assemblage arrests most of your attention."

These words recalled me to myself, and his majesty did me the distinguished honour to announce my name to the illustrious persons who had just entered.

Flora barely evinced her recollection of me by a cold and formal curtsey. I knew that etiquette forbade, in that place and presence, a more cordial salute, yet, I thought that the haughty expression of her beautiful face might at least have been softened into something indicative of kindlier feeling. And moreover, we had not met since 1824; for Flora had

remained on the continent with lady Dalton, on whose marriage with the dark-browed duca, the young Scottish damsel had entered the service of the duchess of Angoulême, as permanent lady in waiting. To this post she was preferred by the duchess, perhaps, in consequence of the steady adherence her family had ever maintained to the cause of Catholicism; an adherence which lost none of its merits in the eyes of so rigid a Catholic as her royal highness. During the period of Flora's absence from Scotland she had often corresponded with a lady in Edinburgh, with whom I was acquainted. In her letters there had been, until of late, some remembrance of me. I had left her in France, little more than a child; she used then to desire her *love* to her friend Malcolm. This memento, as Flora grew older, was exchanged for the colder expression of "affectionate remembrances." This, in its turn, gave place to "kind regards;" and since miss Douglas had grown into something like womanhood, love, regards, and remembrances,

seemed all alike forgotten. She now appeared "a star of radiant beauty," her loveliness enhanced by the grace and dignity which can only be perfectly acquired in the atmosphere of courts. She was another than I had formerly known her, yet the same; there were still the same patrician delicacy of feature, the same light and buoyant form, but the features were more finished, and the form more rounded by womanhood.

She received my evidently agitated obeisance coldly, and, as I thought, almost repulsively, with the slightest possible inclination of her head, and an air altogether unembarrassed.

"What! not even one kind look!" thought I.

My heart felt chilled, and I was miserable.

The horologes of the palace now announced the hour of ten.

"We observe early hours in our exiled court," said the king. "I shall expect your attendance in this place to-morrow at eleven—Your father I shall receive at a later hour."

An inclination of his majesty's head I understood as an intimation to depart; I therefore took leave of the illustrious coterie until the morrow.

CHAPTER VII.

MATTERS MEND A LITTLE.—MY FAIR FRIEND MORE CORDIAL.—I RECEIVE AN APPOINTMENT IN THE KING'S SERVICE.—A JOURNEY.—A MUSICIAN.

PUNCTUAL in my obedience to his majesty's command, the hour of eleven on the following day found me in the hall where we had been assembled the preceding evening. The king was slightly indisposed, and had not yet left his dormitory. The duchesses of Angoulême and Berri had breakfasted early, and had driven into town, accompanied by the archbishop of Rheims.

When I entered the apartment, it contained only Flora. Chilled by the distant coldness of her manner, when in presence of the royal family, I was wholly unable to approach her with more courage than might appertain to a

distant bow. She returned my courtesy with equal reserve, and made some formal inquiries about my family. The answers I made contained certain allusions, which insensibly recalled to our remembrance the continental tour we had made in the year '24; and, with this remembrance, returned all the hopes, the wishes, and the feelings of that happy period. Our subsequent separation seemed to fade from our memories, and before the tête-à-tête had continued half an hour, the charming Flora was retracing with animated eloquence all our various adventures at the chateau de Blasis, until her feelings were so wholly enwrapt in the past, that the tide of her former affectionate playfulness returned, and I caught her laying her hand on my arm as in days of yore, and saying,—

"Do not you remember, *dear Malcolm*"—

"There now," interrupted I, "you have called me '*dear* Malcolm,' and last night you hardly would honour me with a cold and distant curtsey."

"What a pity!" cried the maiden, disdainfully, "I suppose you would have had me treat the royal coterie to a scene of overwhelming reminiscences and tears, and run the risk of a sound lecture from my royal mistress and the stately archbishop of Rheims."

"Nay, dear Flora," said I, quite appeased, "I should indeed be miserable if you incurred the slightest censure upon *my* account."—

"Upon *your* account indeed! I shall take care of that awful risk myself," said the damsel with a well assumed air of disdain, which, however, contained nothing particularly repulsive or discouraging.

"But Flora, when I entered this apartment half an hour since, I could name a certain young lady who received me with a curtsey of chilling frigidity."

"She made her frozen curtsey," answered Flora, slightly blushing, "in return for a very arctic bow with which a certain gentleman honoured her."

"And Flora, has this arctic ice been thawed?"

"I believe it has," said Flora.

A silence followed, a delicious silence, which miss Douglas mischievously broke, by asking me why I did not inquire for her sublime relation, the ci-devant lady Dalton. "I know," said I, "she is married to the duke of F****."

"Yes," answered Flora; "he is generally believed to have poisoned his former wife."

"Good heavens! and what could have induced lady Dalton to marry him?"

"She married him to get at his *bumps*, I verily believe," said Flora; "for the marvellous tales that we heard of his iniquities, inspired my philosophic aunt with an anxious wish to *craniologize* him; which, as the duke wore a hyacinthine wig and affected the beau garçon, she sagely surmised that no one could do, unless a wife or a friseur."

"And was her philosophic curiosity gratified?"

"Oh dear, yes. She took an analytic sketch

of all his illustrious bumps during the honeymoon, which has been engraved for her forthcoming work, 'The Philosophy of Craniology.'"

"How did the illustrious pair get on together?" asked I.

"Um—not much to boast of. The duke admired *me* too much to please my aunt; and one day when he had been obliquely satirizing her stupendous person, he happened to observe that *I* was very interesting; 'but,' added he, 'a signora *twice* as large'—

"'Would be *twice* as interesting,' interrupted my aunt; 'for there would be exactly twice as much of such a person to interest one.'

"'But,' resumed the duke, 'your Flora is an angel every inch.'—

"'Then,' retorted the duchess, 'since every inch of Flora is angelic, it follows, that if she possessed twice as many inches, she would be twice as angelic.'

" 'I do not understand that logic,' said the bridegroom."

"They were a comical pair, Flora," said I.

Again there was a pause in our conversation. *I* was resolved to break it this time. "Flora," said I, "I love you very much."

"I am glad to hear it," she answered, with an unembarrassed laugh.

"Are you really? But, Flora, do *you* love *me?*"

"Pretty well," said she; "though I suppose I would be deemed a most improper person for saying so—that is, by all prudes."

"Do you love me as well as Sholto?"

"I dare say I do."

"As well as your father?"

"Better, probably; he is a sour, cross, and stern parent; and although I respect, and would not disobey him, I cannot say in conscience, I am very fond of him."

"Do you love me as well as the duchess of Angoulême?"

"What! my benefactress? no, nor quarter

as well. I love *her* better than all the rest of the world; and you would acknowledge that I *ought*, if you knew her incessant kindness to me."

Ere I could answer, an officer of the household appeared, and summoned me to the presence of the king. I was ushered to his majesty's dressing room.

"I have been ill, Malcolm," said he when I entered, "but am better now. I wanted to tell you the post you are to fill in my service; I will make you one of my confidential secretaries; have you any objection?"

"Sire, I feel highly distinguished."

"D'Autun will show you the apartments you are to occupy in the palace," continued the king; "and now I have only to desire you to bring your father, as he wished to be presented; I shall be ready to receive him immediately."

I accordingly departed to George Square, where my father resided when in Edinburgh.

"Did you see Dunsneath at court?" was almost the first question he asked me.

"No, sir," I replied. I took care not to mention having met Dunsneath's enchanting daughter, the fair Flora. My father had never seen her, and was not aware that she was in the service of the duchess of Angoulême.

"His majesty," said I, "desires to receive you immediately." My father accordingly ordered his carriage, and we drove to the palace.

"The day *was*," said the old man, sighing bitterly as he alighted beneath the royal apartments,—"the day *was*, when this royal pile was graced by the presence of Scottish monarchs and a Scottish court. The feeling may be accounted obsolete; but I confess that I cannot reflect without shame and sorrow on the utter extinction of the national independence of Scotland."

As my father spoke, we ascended the stairs, and passed along the gallery leading to the presence chamber of king Charles. Our names were announced, and we entered. There were only the king, the duke of Angoulême, and a

gentleman usher in the apartment. His majesty received my father very graciously, and said, he was glad to perceive that among the brave and the noble of Scotland, there were some who could *still* disapprove of rebellion, and evince their sympathy for the victims of an infidel revolution.

"I am glad," said the king to me, when the old gentleman was gone, "that your father selected this day for his visit to an ex-monarch; to-morrow, Malcolm, we must be on the road at an early hour."

These words referred to a meditated expedition to the Perthshire highlands, which the king purposed making under the *incognito* of "Mr. Johnston." His suite was abridged to myself and two servants; our destination was the castle of Dalmanzie, from whose hospitable owner I had received a warm invitation. The servants received strict injunctions not to reveal their royal master's rank. The duties of attending on his majesty's person, I undertook *pro tempore;* and the good-humoured old

monarch laughed heartily as we set out on our excursion, from which he anticipated some amusement.

Northwards, accordingly, we steered our course, and although the season was rapidly advancing into winter, yet the weather was perfectly serene and clear. The romantic beauty of the country elicited his warmest admiration, which was also deservedly excited by the incomparably well-managed farms that extended on every side for many miles.

"Scotland," observed he, "may be termed a great university of agriculture; and how creditable to the habits of its population that it should be so! There seems to be an order, a scientific method, an unexcelled regularity, the result of a keen, sagacious, and experienced governing head, in the numerous districts that we pass through, that bear evidence of a strong national intellect, directed steadily to that most useful end, the improvement of the soil which their Maker has given this people to cultivate. Ah! que ce sont de

braves gens, ces Ecossois!"—And his majesty frequently repeated this laudatory exclamation, as the noble farm buildings, the extensive and well-tilled tracts of arable, the substantial dykes and fences, and the well-appointed ploughs and teams, bore perpetual witness to the noble, the virtuous industry of a people who had fought and conquered nature herself—who had rendered, by incessant, honourable toil, their country fertile and productive, despite inclement skies and natural sterility.

"Ah, que ce sont de braves gens, ces Ecossois!"

The carriage in which we travelled was perfectly plain, and did not possess the smallest armorial decoration. We proceeded rather rapidly, and as evening fell, we arrived at the little inn of Glenquiddart in Perthshire, kept by the active, bustling, hospitable Bessie M'Cowie.

"This is, I fear, a poor hostelry for your majesty's accommodation," said I, as the car-

riage stopped in front of Bessie M'Cowie's neatly whitewashed hospitium.

"Never mind majesty, my dear Malcolm," said the king; "I thought you had more discretion than to utter that formidable word on our present expedition. I am '*Mr. Johnston*' now, and the inn will do admirably well—let down the glass."

I did so, and the door of the carriage was presently opened by Mr. Johnston's servants, who quickly ascertained that Bessie M'Cowie could afford us a neat little parlour, clean bedrooms, "wi' quilts, sheets, and siclike napery as white as drifted snaw, and bleezing peat fires in ilka ane of the apartments."

Entering the inn, we found this promise fully realized, and one of our attendants inquired what we could have for supper.

"Ow—jest a haggis, or a wheen red trout that Donald had caught in the loch not twa hours syne; they were aye in season in that loch, as doubtless his honour the auld gentleman wad ken. If their honours wad like a

drap o' speerits, she had got as gude as there were in a' Scotland. She had tea and coffee nonsense too, if the gentlefolk thocht weel o't."

All these offers, save the last, were declined on the parts of Mr. Johnston and myself, although they were fully availed of by our attendants. We solaced ourselves with the fragrant exhalements of some excellent coffee that our hostess produced; and ever and anon the quaker-like sobriety of our tête-à-tête was disturbed by the noisy revelry and laughter, that sounded from the kitchen in many a merry peal. Snatches of songs, and an occasional strain on the violin, told us that musicians were in company.

"Come," said the old king, suddenly starting up, " we will go to the kitchen.—What makes you stare, man, as if I were inflicting an indelible wound on my dignity? Come—since I *am* here incognito, *ma foi* we'll see it out—I will not speak much, as my accent might betray me; but it is hard to hear merry human voices, without feeling desirous to gaze upon

the happy beings from whom they proceed—Allons!"

And the king—I beg his pardon—Mr. Johnston, proceeded to the kitchen, and took his place on a rude wooden settle near the cozy ingle-neuk, with as much ease and *bonhommie* as if he had never occupied a throne.

A party of peasants were just dispatching their supper, the relics of a lordly haggis, (which dish, as somebody says, has a strong resemblance to a boiled bagpipe;) and, perceiving the entrance of Mr. Johnston, whom they took for a western laird, they respectfully moved aside, and ceased to converse with each other, although a moment before, they had been laughing and talking loud and merrily. I knew that Mr. Johnston wished to hear them talk; that he wished for the excitement of a new scene, and accordingly I entered into conversation with Bessie M'Cowie, whose loquacity, if once set going, would probably put the tongues of all her guests again in motion.

"Pray, Mrs. M'Cowie," asked I, "where is the man whose strains upon the fiddle we heard five minutes ago? I don't see any body here with a violin."

"Nae wonder for ye, sir, for the chield's gane out till the stable—he'll be here again the minute, I'se warrant him."

"What's his name, ma'am?"

"Sandy M'Dow the poet. Ow, sir, a' folk ken Sandy weel; he's an unco gifted tyke, nae doot, though I winna deny that he's whiles a wee fractious. But nae wonder he suld think highly o'himsel, for ye'll no meet mony that hae Sandy's gifts baith in powitry and music. And his ballants are na foolish, nicky-nacky love sangs and siclike, that only cuitle silly lassies' lugs and set them dreaming; but gude, sober, sonsie sangs about the deeds of our auld Scottish Bruces and Wallaces, and kings, and queens, and warriors. Ow, mon, 'tis weel worth your while to hear Sandy M'Dow; he said just before ye came in that he had lately composed a new sang—I'll cry

him in, wi' Mr. Johnston's leave, and gar him sing it."

"You will very much oblige me," said Mr. Johnston. I also added my acknowledgments, and Sandy was accordingly summoned. He soon made his appearance, with his violin under his arm, and on being invited by the hostess, took his seat on the side of the fireplace fronting the "cozy neuk" occupied by Mr. Johnston.

Sandy was a nondescript looking sort of animal. He had a wooden leg, to which he would sometimes capriciously allude in his songs, but he took delight in baffling the curiosity of all his acquaintance respecting the mode in which he had suffered mutilation. He had, about five or six years previously, dropped suddenly into the sequestered valley of Glenquiddart, nobody knew whence: and he speedily acquired a permanent welcome among its simple hearted inhabitants, by the constant exertion of his skill, both as poet and musician, at all their weddings, wakes,

and merry meetings. His form was stout, and his shoulders remarkably muscular and broad, and his keen grey eye was full of intelligent expression. But in other respects his proportions were defective; one of his arms seemed longer than the other, and his features were singularly twisted; whether from natural or accidental deformity it would not have been easy to decide.

"Weel, Sandy," said Mrs. M'Cowie, as the minstrel entered, "ye have gotten something new, ye were saying?"

"Troth have I, cummer," answered the poet, complacently.

"A love-sang, belike?" inquired a waggish young farmer.

"Troth that is it no!" replied Sandy, repelling the imputation with becoming scorn.

"Weel, mon, will ye let us hae't?" said the matronly Bessie.

"You will favour me much by singing it," said Mr. Johnston, very courteously.

"Troth I wull, wi' muckle pleasure, sir."

"And if it is na a love-ditty, Sandy, pray what is it?" asked the young farmer.

"It is a grand, contemplative, historical, and philosoophical sketch, like, of the inequalities, vagaries, contrarieties, whilk aye beset this mortal life; and whilk I have made some sma' attempt to exemplify, by a reference till certain indubitable records of the fluctuating fortunes of royalty. Hem! hem!"

Bessie M'Cowie looked at me with an eye that seemed to say, "did I no tell ye that our poet was a chield by ordinar?"

To say truth, I felt apprehensive that the historical and philosophical bard might give utterance to something offensive to the ears or feelings of *one* of his auditors; but Mr. Johnston, who possibly surmised the cause of my anxiety, smiled, and whispered to me,

"I shall sit it out—it will divert me."

The musician began by some flourishes upon his violin, which were certainly executed in a manner that surprised me. He then swept a few slow chords, and chaunted out in a sweet,

well-pitched voice, and with remarkably distinct articulation, the following ditty, to the air of "AULD LANG SYNE:"

"There 's nought, my freends, in this brief mortal life, but ups and downs;
Tars lose their legs, or arms, and monarchs lose their crowns.
Lang syne a Scottish Queen there was, sae young, sae bonnie then!
They said that the puir thing was ower fond of the men.
I dinna ken preceesely how the real truth may be,
But strongly I opinionate the charge a bluidy lee!
The carline was nae ither than our ain auld Scottish Mary;
But she fand her leal lieges a' grown unco camsteary.
Sae she sune behuved to quit for aye her native Scottish land,
For Eleezabeth of England had haulden out her hand,
And gar'd puir Mary trow that she wad faithfully protect her,
Sae southwards Mary gang'd, wi' evil counsel to direct her.
For the fause English deil cuttit off puir Mary 's head,
And och! ochonari! she was numbered with the dead.

"Mary's grandson had a wrastle wi' the people for their creed;
He fain wad force on kindly Scots the bishops' bluidy breed;
A' kings wha NOW wad force folks' faith,—permit me to remind 'em,
How Charlie, airing at Whiteha', forgot his head behind him.

Ohonari! 'twas an evil day, that royal bluid suld spill,
But honest Charles was ower stiff, as Scotia ken'd fu' weel.

"Neist Jamie laboured hard, my freends, to set up papistrie,
But said the while he wussed to leave his subjects' conscience free.
The dour auld carle took fright ae night, and fled frae Britain's shore;
He saved his head, but tint his royal throne for evermore.

"Then cam FEIFTEEN, and FORTY-FIVE—Wow! they were stirring days!
The twa Stuart Chevaliers sune set a' Scotland in a blaze!
Our ain puir Chairlie raised sax thousand stalwart Scottish men;
But thrones are easier tint, my freends, than gotten back again.

"Then FRANCE gets unco tired of kings and queens, and siccan gear,
And guillotines puir Louis, and his bonny royal dear.
O! France, it is an unco fearfu' place for kings and queens,
Wi' conspiracies, an' traitors dark, and awfu' guillotines!
"I'd rather beg,
Wi' my wooden leg,
Or fiddle jigs
On the harvest riggs,
For Scotia's canny lads and lassies merrily to dance,
Than trust my puir auld hurdies on the kittle throne o' France.
There's Charlie Bourbon hunted like a tyke till Holyrood,
(I'm sure I wuss the honest mon nae ill, but muckle good;)
For kingcraft is a kittle trade; the deil a worse ane going,
And the troubles that encompass it suld mak auld Bourbon knowing.

In hunting him awa', the French hae made a fulish wark;
They've hunted off KING LOG, 'tis true, but *now* they've got KING STORK.
But the daftest fule of a', wad be the grey-hair'd auld Bour-bōne,
If e'er he sought to sit again on yon unchancy throne.

"And noo, my freends, ye've heard my tale of royal ups and downs,
Far happier we in humble life, puir rustic cottar clowns!
If tossed aboot in life, ye ken we havena far to fa';
But a tumble frae a pinnacle 's the tumble warst of a'.
'Tis maistly wi' the rich and great that cruel fate plays randy;
The deil a monarch o' them a', sae blythe as fiddler Sandy.
My bow 's my skeptre; my auld rusty wig 's my royal crown;
This kitchen is my royal court; I fearna Fortune's frown.
This three-legg'd stool's my royal throne; a happier monarch I,
Than kings encompassed wi' a kingdom's gorgeous pageantry.

CHORUS.

"I'd rather beg,
Wi' my wooden leg,
Or fiddle jigs
On the harvest riggs,
When Autumn's moon
Sails high aboon,
Than reign a king—
—'Tis an awsome thing."

CHAPTER VIII.

SANDY TURNS AUTOBIOGRAPHER, ALTHOUGH NOT WITHOUT SOME PRESSING.—HE OFFERS TO TELL MY FORTUNE, AND I CONSENT TO TRY HIS SKILL.

His mutilated majesty of the violin was roaringly joined in his chorus by all the young men present, who waited, with their attention strained to the utmost, while he sang it first alone, and then caught up the words with quickness and unhesitating accuracy. Sandy gave two or three final rasps with his bow across the strings, with the air of a *gran' maestro;* put his instrument aside, and leaned with conscious importance against the wall at the back of his stool.

"That ballant o' yours, Sandy," said an old farmer, "is something purpose-like and rational. There is food for the intellect in't. What

think ye, sir?" said the speaker, addressing himself to the pseudo Mr. Johnston.

"I think," replied Mr. Johnston, "that there is much truth in it, and that a taste for such historical ballads is honourable to the intellectual character of the Scottish nation.

I should, perhaps, observe, that the Caledonian idiom of the ballad, had concealed some, though but very little, of its purport from the royal auditor, whose quickness of perception enabled him to gather with ease its general tendency.

"Dootless, your honour," resumed the farmer, "it is better pastime, and far mair improving, to listen to such, than to hearken to the willie-waulie nipperty-tipperty stuff aboot love, and a' sic trashery, that sae mony sangs are filled wi'."

"Certainly," said Mr. Johnston. "Pray, Sandy—is not that your name?"

"Sandy M'Dow, sir," answered the minstrel.

"Not to flatter you, Sandy, you have doubtless much cleverness. In what part of the

kingdom were you born, Sandy? and who were your parents?" Sandy looked annoyed and awkward, and was silent.

"Troth, sir," said Bessie M'Cowie, laughing, "ye'll be clever if ye can coax sae muckle information out of Sandy. The elbow-jigging chield has been here amang us the maist feck of sax gude years, and he ne'er wad tell us wha his parents were, or whare he cam frae, or how he tint his leg. But he may as weel gie us his history now, since sae grand a gentleman as your honour axes for it."

"Aweel, wi' all my heart," said Sandy, "if the honourable gentleman will tell me *his* in turn."

"For shame, ye daft rudas!" cried Bessie, indignantly; "how dare ye offer to make ony sic bargain wi' his honour? Troth I'm blate, so I am! Ye suld apologeeze for making sae free."

But Sandy seemed unconscious of offence. "A mon's a mon for a' that," he answered;

"his honour doesna offer to reprove me, Luckie."

"No, Sandy," said Mr. Johnston, laughing very good humouredly; "I do not reprove you, indeed. I could not venture to reprove a king, you know, upon his three-legged throne; and if you do not wish to tell your history, I have certainly no business to inquire into it."

"Your honour shows mair breeding then, than a' the farmer chields and cottar lads and lassies hereabouts, that are aye tormenting me to tell them my story, as if I had aught worth the telling o't."

"Well, Sandy," whispered I, "be it good or bad, let the old gentleman have it; you know you can skip any part of it you would not like to tell."

"Aweel then, gentlefolks and semple, here goes. My father was the mate of a smuggling lugger, that traded atween Aberdeen and Hamburgh. He had his pickings, honest mon, and was making siller unco fast, until one unchancy

day the lugger was pursued by a king's ship, and captured wi' all hands aboard. Some o' the men got into the boats, but the threat of a broadside frae his majesty's ship sune coaxed them to bring to. As my father was the mate, and ane o' the principal persons belonging to the lugger, they expected that his treatment would be unco hard; some said he could na *win by* hanging *. But I dinna ken how it was; he was aye the deil for wheedling, and he managed to mak interest for himsel' wi' the son of our auld laird, wha was captain of his majesty's frigate, the Invincible, then lying off Gravesend. They were unco busy, pressing at the time for sailors to man the Invincible, and my father being a weel ken'd hond at sailoring, swure that if his life was spared, he'd prove the best mon they ever had on board the frigate. The captain managed the matter wi' the Admiralty; my father was forgiven for his smuggling jobs, and the captain and officers were right weel pleased to get sic a knowing

* Escape hanging.

hand, wha could help to tutor the raw young landsmen they were pressing every day.

"My father managed to get leave to tak his wife on board, whilk he could no' have done if his forebears had na been of the captain's father's following. All this, ye'll observe, took place before I saw the light; so ye'll no expect me to be vera minute in my detailment of a' the parteec'lars. As soon as the complement o' hands was filled, the frigate was ordered on a cruise along the Bay of Biscay. Cruise awa' she did, the maist part of four months; and meanwhile ye'll no hinder my mither to become unco large in the family way. My father was perched on the mast head one day looking out for a French privateer, when twa hove in sight, and the frigate gave chase. The French chaps thinking that as they were vera weel armed, and being twa to one, they might venture a scratch, did not try to escape, but waited quietly until the Invincible cam within a quarter of a mile, or aiblins half. I've heard my father say it was

the deil of a het action, for the mounseers fought like dragons, and the British, as they always do, like deils. But my mither had less reason than daddie himsel' to like the skirmishing, for the puir feckless woman was ta'en in the pains o'labour; nae pleasant predicament, I suld opine, in the middle of a peppering engagement—some of our men were boarding the Mercure, as ane o' the privateers was ca'd—sabres slashing, pistols flashing, men hewing, shouting, slaughtering, and my mither roaring like a' the bulls of Bashan; when a chain-shot frae the ither privateer cut ane of our masts clean in twa—the Invincible got an awfu' jerk, and I popped into the warld."

"An awkward period, certainly, to select for an accouchement," said I. "Well, what was your first exploit on entering life?"

"I bawled and squalled like ither bairns, and throve apace. We captured ane o' the mounseers the day I was born, and sunk the ither. In four years afterward, my father was sae badly wounded in anither engagement, that

he was dismissed wi' a pension, as unfit for further service. He took my mither and mysell till Aberdeen, whare I grew up betimes, a wild, ranting, roaring, roystering blade, with a father that couldna, and a mither that wadna controul me.

"Cat after kind, as the auld saying is; my daddie had begun as a smuggler, and I often listened to his stories of the free ocean rovers, wi' a wild delight that gar'd me long to get out on the account mysel'. I often met the smuggler lads ashore, and mony ane o' them took a liking to me. Meanwhile, I behooved to fall in love with as bonnie a lassock as e'er beetled claiths upon Aberdeen inches. Her name was Peggie M'Gowan, and a prettier, comelier, better built brig, ne'er hoisted sail in Aberdeen. Ah, Peggie, Peggie! what a coal black ee the deil had got! and how she *could* look through and through a mon wi't! That falcon ee o' Peggie's was dootless the undoing of mony a puir chield; half the laddies were in love wi' her, and sae would the tither half too, an they

only had the luck to get into her company. But her tongue banged her een a' to sawdust. She could tune it to ony thing ava'. She could skin the vera flints wi't, gin she only got cross; and then again she'd wheedle milk out of a mouse, if she tuned it to coaxing or 'flumming. She could be either like a lavrock in a bower, or a seagull in a storm, as she pleased.

"I never was ony great beauty, as ye'll readily believe, so I did not expect her to fall in love wi' my gude looks. There are other things a woman often loves in a man, muckle mair nor his beauty. The tane o' my arms was langer than the tither, but the short ane was langer nor onybody else's. I was born a buffer; I cam ready trained into the warld, and was able to *pitch it* into ony mon's ribs. Sae I managed to scare awa' all suitors frae Peggie M'Gowan; I staved in three chields' ribs, pounded half a dozen noses till jeelly, and knocked some half score een out. After that, ye may swear I hadna mony compeetitors for Peggie's affections. But *one* stour carle there

was, wha swure he didna care a plack for me; and truth to tell, I opined that Peggie liked him. He was stout and tall, and could box vary weel for a Hielandmon; for boxing, after a', is a'thegither a southron accomplishment; but indeed his forebears were frae Lothian. I resolved to bring our claims till a point. 'Mr. Pattieson,' quo' I, one day that a hantle chields were birling merrily in Luckie M'Shane's public,—'Mr. Pattieson,' quo' I, 'I hear ye mak unco pretensions till the hond of *my* joe' (and I laid muckle emphasis on *my*).—'Allow me to ask ye, if ye'll gie up a' claim to the lassie now before witnesses; or do ye desiderate a milling?'

"Wi' that he jumped up, strippit aff, a ring was cleared incontinent, and till't we went like a couple o' deils. He fought vera weel, but I beat him till stockfish; and miss Peggie fixed that day twa months for our wedding. Meanwhile I was offered a run across till Hamburgh in a smuggling vessel, by the mate, with whom I had formed an intimacy, and

as naebody liked larks or sprees better than your vera humble servitor, I accepted the mate's offer willingly, and sailed awa', expecting to be bock in three weeks or a month. But a revenue cruiser espied us, and chased us; the smuggler made fight, and I gat a shot in my leg that smashed the bane in splinters, and troth I had nae choice but death or amputation, as the surgeon said. I escaped punishment, as it was proved by mony witnesses that I was not ane of the crew of the smuggler, but merely went aboard for a spree. The day or twa before I was to marry Peggie, I arrived upon a cart at Aberdeen, and was taken till Luckie M'Shane's. I was placed, weak and weary, on an arm-chair in a corner of the taproom near the ingle; on a table before me lay the fause wooden leg I behuved to wear in future; I was thinking in my mind, wad Peggie keep her plighted troth or no, when wha suld come out o' the inner chamber but miss Peggie her ain sell, dressed out as fine as fivepence, in company wi' Pattieson, wha had

nearly recovered frae the milling that I gied him.

"I gnashed my teeth wi' rage and pain; but I couldna help saying till Peggie,—'Will ye keep your troth or no, lassie?'

"'Troth will I,' quo' she, 'and that wi' a' my heart, when ye show me the mon that I plighted it until.'

"'I am here,' quo' I, 'the same Sandy as ever I was.'

"'Faith, you're not,' quo' Peggie, smart eneugh; 'for the chield that gat my promise had a pair o' brawny legs, and *you've* got only *ane*, my birkie. When the twa-leggit chield reappears to claim my promise, he winna hae reason to compleen o' me, I'm bail for him.'

"With that, Pattieson laughed, and I whipped my wooden stumper aff the table, and hit him a clour across the shins wi't, that gar'd him roar. He was ganging to maul me, but the bystanders gathered aboot him and hindered him, saying that it wadna be fair play to strike a mutilated mon; and that his carrying

Peggie awa' was mair than a full set-aff against the clour.

"My life wad dootless hae been miserable ever since, only for my natural cheerfulness o' temper and contented disposition. However, ye may weel opine, that the place whare thae occurrents chaunced, wasna preceesely the spot in the haill warld whar *I* could be happiest. Sae I quitted it for aye, and after roaming wi' my fiddle and my wooden limb through divers districts, I hae finally settled mysell doon in the hospitable kitchen o' Luckie M'Cowie; whar I trust to pass the remainder o' my days in peace and thankfu'ness."

"Thankfulness!" involuntarily echoed Mr. Johnston. (The lesson, I thought, was not lost on him.)

"Yes, sir," said I; "this poor fellow has suffered a severe dispensation both in heart and person, and yet he is not only contented, but thankful."

"Thankful," pursued Sandy M'Dow, "that

I wasna served worse; that I wasna carried aff in the midst o' my sins; and that *time*, of whilk I trust in heaven to make gude use, still is spared me for repentance."

"Ah," muttered Mr. Johnston to himself, "*que ce sont de braves gens, ces Ecossois!*"

The peasants all testified their wonder at the minstrel's tale, and the interest they took in his adventures; and then, as the hour waxed late for persons of their early and industrious habits, they bade good bye to *the Laird*, (i. e. Mr. Johnston,) to myself, to Luckie M'Cowie, and lastly to Sandy M'Dow; and then filed off to their respective homes.

Mr. Johnston was fatigued and excited, and went up to his bedroom, the boards and tables in which were scoured as white as chalk; and the snowy "napery" was redolent of heathy fragrance.

"Come up when I knock, Malcolm," said Mr. Johnston.

I accordingly descended once more to the

kitchen, leaving the illustrious traveller to offer his devotions to heaven, until he should summon me. There was no one but Sandy in the kitchen: the men, as I have already mentioned, had all returned to their cottages; and Luckie and her two servant girls were engaged elsewhere in household duties.

"You've met your own share of adventures in your day, Mr. Sandy," said I, taking my seat at his side.

"And my day is na clean gane, neither," answered he.

"Certainly not, Mr. M'Dow. But, allow me to observe, that it struck me as being somewhat strange, that you have not a morsel of the accent peculiar to the Aberdonians. Your tongue is pretty broad southland Scotch."

"And ye're a keen chap, truly, and to notice *that* sma' discrepancy," replied Sandy, chuckling, and fixing his keen eyes on me with one of the most penetrating looks I ever saw.

"And is your history of your adventures *true?*" continued I, half in earnest, half in jest; although, at the moment I asked the question, I certainly entertained no serious doubts of it.

"Deil ane word o' truth in it a'; but a haill bunch o' lees, frae beginning till end!" answered Sandy, in a suppressed tone, and immediately bursting out into a self-applauding laugh.

"Good heavens! and what could induce you to tell a whole budget of fictions to that respectable old laird?"

"An' what the deil else could I do, mon? Ye a' were tearing my een out to tell you my story! my story! my story! and if I had really naething to tell, why, good manners compelled me to *improvise* a leetle, that I might not disappoint sae mony anxious auditors. Besides, I concluded it a', (as weel 's my sang,) wi' an unco useful moral for yon man, an he'll profit by it."

"What man?" said I, much surprised.

"Him aboon," replied Sandy, inverting his thumb towards the loft.—

"Do you mean Mr. Johnston?" asked I.

"Mr. Johnston! ay, troth; him that 's nae mair Mr. Johnston than I am."

"I really don't understand you," said I.

"Ye brazen it out unco weel, nae doot; *that* must be confessed. But if ye blame *me* for a sma' bit o' figment, narrated for your honour's delectation, why d' ye no blame the auld king for telling us that he 's Mr. Johnston, in a free, safe country, whar there 's nae need o' disguisements?"

"You are perfectly incomprehensible," said I. This was true, indeed, in one sense; for I could not possibly comprehend how this whimsical man had acquired the knowledge to which he so undoubtingly laid claim. It never, for a moment, crossed my mind that either of the king's sworn servants had betrayed his rank, and I was right in not suspecting them. As for the postillions, they were

westland loons picked up by one of the servants; and no more harboured an idea that Mr. Johnston was ex-king of France, than that he was ex-khan of Tartary. Sandy, meanwhile, continued smiling at my evident perplexity.

"I rambled a year wi' the gipsies," he resumed, "and learnt a wee pickle o' the noble art of palmistry. Will ye show me your hand, young mon?"

"You have given me so very bad a specimen of skill," said I, "in asserting that the old laird above stairs is the ex-king of France, that I should not put faith in your palmistry."

"He, he, he!" chuckled Sandy, much amused. "I discovered him, young gentleman, by my skeel in physiognomy. A mon wha has borne crown and skeptre for some years, acquires an indelible dignity of countenance and manner, that a keen lad like mysell can easily decypher. But will ye show us your palm, a' the while?"

I abandoned by hand to his inspection. He traced the lines attentively, and said at length, "Laddie, I perceive that ye're in love."

"A likely guess," said I, with an air of indifference. My curiosity, however, was strongly excited. "Anything else?"

"You fear," pursued Sandy, as he scanned the lines, "that your love will be crossed by some mon that has dominion ower ye; I think, by this line, it is your father."

My astonishment was obvious to Sandy, who threw himself back, laughing. "Am I right *now*, my birkie?"

"Have you any more wonders to announce?" said I; "perhaps you can discover my name from my hand?"

"Let me see," said the minstrel, resuming his scrutiny; "the *name*'s a kittle point to discover frae the hond; and it isn't one chield in an hundred, whose lines are plain enough for huz to decypher it. However, I'll try—the

serving folk ca'd ye '*Mac Pherson*' to-night, but that's no it, my laddie; your name—here, here—nae, *this* suld be the line—I hae't! I hae't!" he exclaimed in triumph; "Your name is MALCOLM HAY."

"Now, Mr. Sandy M'Dow," said I gravely, "do not for one moment suppose me such a fool as to think you derive your information either from palmistry or physiognomy. I intreat you, however, to keep it to yourself; for although if tattled, it could not do us serious injury, yet it might really give much inconvenience and annoyance."

"Your wull maun be obeyed — honour bright!" cried Sandy, laying his hand upon his heart, with an air of such fervent sincerity, that I implicitly believed his assurance, despite the specimens of *improvising* with which he had indulged us.—"Shall I tell Mr. Johnston," said I, "that your autobiography was a bit of a figment?"

"Na—ye maunna do that at no rate; you

promise me, do ye?" quoth Sandy, extending his hand.

"'Tis a bargain," said I, clasping his palm in token of mutual good faith.

"I'se tell ye what it is," said Sandy, "that there 's no anither body breathing, (forbye them that ken my story already,) to whom I'd have confessed that my narrative to-night was a' a lee. But there 's that in your face, boy, that gars me trust you."

"Perhaps you will tell me your *real* story then?"

Sandy shook his head negatively. "Not now,--not now, at any rate; but ye *may* know it a' some day. There—there 's his auld majesty the laird of the Johnstons knocking for ye—gang till him—gang till him—and now gude night, and may God bless ye, boy."

I wished him good night, and ascended to Mr. Johnston's chamber, marvelling much at the singular character from whom I had just parted, and at the acquaintance with my private affairs that he displayed.

I performed my duties as gentleman of the bedchamber *à merveille*, received the kind old monarch's patriarchal blessing, and retired to repose.

CHAPTER IX.

A HIGHLAND CHIEF'S MENAGE.—AN APPALLING EXPLOSION.

THE following day we resumed our journey about noon. It had frozen hard in the night; but Mr. Johnston, who was furred to the throat, did not seem inconvenienced by the coldness of the weather. Ere we entered the carriage, Sandy took an opportunity of asking me our destination.—"My friend," I replied, "you will readily conceive that I cannot reply to your question."

"O, vera weel—vera weel—I canna wyte ye for't, laddie—na, but I like ye a' the better for't. I see my opinion o' ye 's rightly

formed—but, mayhap I may inquire if ye mean to return this road?"

"That is more than I know myself," answered I.

"An excellent reason, nae doot, for not telling me. And now adieu, young sir;" and Sandy chaunted in a low, impressive tenor voice,

> "Fareweel, fareweel; Grace be your shield;
> Be Heaven's protection aye your bield*;
> Though hopes be crost,
> Though joys be lost,
> Ae thing will firm comfort yield,—
> The trust the Gospel hath revealed.

Mind that, laddie; ye may no be the waur for a bit o' gude advice; ye suld aye keep *that trust* before your een. Fare ye weel. Gin ye suld return this way, I'se be unco glad to see ye."

I shook his hand warmly, and followed Mr. Johnston into the carriage.

"That old minstrel—Sandy, you call him—is a very extraordinary person in his line, Mal-

* *Bield*, shelter.

colm. If the poor fellow did but guess who his auditor was, while he chaunted out his ominous stanzas about '*auld Charlie Bourbon!*' how astonished and confused he would be!"

"May I ask, sire, how your majesty——"

"*Sire*, Malcolm, and *majesty?*"

"Well, sir, may I ask how you liked your accommodations last night?"

"Extremely well. Comfort is quite attainable without show, or magnificence. Ah, this island word '*comfort!*' it must be acknowledged that you British understand it, in every gradation of life, far better than we French."

"I very much fear, sir," said I, "that you have managed very badly for your *comforts* at Dalmanzie, by commanding me to bring you *impromptu*, as a friend of my own, without announcing your rank to sir Dugald M'Laren; or at least giving some preliminary notice to the good old knight, that a friend would accompany me on my visit."

"I fear nothing, Malcolm. Surely our re-

tinue is small; the knight has a plentiful estate, and the larders of Dalmanzie are at least as well provided as those of any other Scottish gentleman of condition."

"Oh, sir, I am perfectly aware that the camp is well provisioned, and sir Dugald is the soul of hospitality. My fears are of a different description. The old knight is what we term in English, an oddity; his habits are *bizarre;* with a hearty, hospitable welcome for his guests, he mingles some strange practices of ancient Scottish thrift, which I fear you may find inconvenient."

"Of what description?"

"Why, sir, one of his singularities is, that, with numerous excellent apartments in his castle, his knightship restricts his family to the use of one small parlour for all their meals and ordinary occupations; in fact, they almost entirely live in it. Now, *you* will be obliged to endure this diminutive parlour, as sir Dugald never dreams of making any change in his usual arrangements for *me*."

"So much the better, Malcolm; it is better aired, no doubt, than the state apartments, and we shall be fortunate in a safeguard from colds. Besides, it is all these whimsicalities that I desire to enjoy incognito."

"I hope, sir, you may not have occasion to repent of your experiment."

"Oh, *point du tout.* I suppose sir Dugald's object in confining his friends to one room, is to save the furniture in the others?"

"I believe so, sir."

"Ah, but I hope this economical system is not pursued in the dormitories?"

"Oh, no, sir; they are large and commodious."

"That is well; *au reste*, there is nothing I like better than to see the manners and observances of other days pertinaciously adhered to, in some sequestered castle, by a whimsical sexagenarian like your knight."

We continued to converse on various subjects, until the carriage stopped, about half an hour before sunset, at the outer gate of the

castle of Dalmanzie. We entered between two gigantic piers of rusticated masonry, and the scene presented by the avenue within enchained our admiration, not so much from its beauty, as its perfect singularity. I certainly never saw any thing like it.

The avenue was as straight as an arrow, perfectly level, and a full Scotch mile in length. It was very broad, and beautifully kept. It was flanked the whole way with two high bounding walls, covered to the top with a luxuriant profusion of ivy. Between each wall and the walk, stretched a verdant grassy border, about eighteen or twenty feet in width; so that the distance from wall to wall could scarcely have been less than seventy feet. Not a tree was to be seen on either side of the avenue; the long perspective was unbroken till it reached the castle, which stood at the further extremity, with its high gabled roofs, and lofty groups of chimneys. Behind the mansion rose an ancient wood, and in the farthest back-ground was a bare, brown, rugged mountain, towards whose

jagged peak the sun was now fast sinking; lighting up the long, wild, stern vista, with a stream of dazzling splendour.

"Magnifique! magnifique! je n'ai jamais vu rien de tel!" exclaimed the king. "There is a beauty in old walls such as these, that must be seen to be appreciated; I see they are strengthened at intervals with mullions. The whole scene is unique; ah, if your knight be as unique as his residence, I shall certainly enjoy a treat."

We drove along the avenue very slowly, and reached the upper gate exactly as the sun sank behind the peak of Bennarue. We soon heard a loud and jovial chorus of halloos from a different quarter; it rapidly approached; a gate flew open at the opposite corner of the quadrangle; and in rushed a merry and tumultuous rout, with horns ringing sharp and cheerily, and voices shouting lustily in every intonation of mirthful recklessness. At the head of this joyous band was sir Dugald M'Laren, mounted on a noble black charger, who, although he

had evidently seen a hard day's service, pawed the pavement of the court, and pricked his ears to the blasts of the horns, and the loud, boisterous yells of the merry huntsmen. The knight was dressed in a scarlet velvet frock, that buttoned tightly on his brawny and athletic frame, exhibiting his broad expanse of chest and strongly knitted shoulders to the best advantage. His head gear was a simple Scottish bonnet with a chieftain's feather, and his nether habiliments were trews of the M'Laren tartan. The crowd opened in front of a door leading down to the kitchen apartments, and a couple of tall Highlanders lifted on their shoulders down the steps, the carcase of a mighty stag, the gallant victim of the chase.

An attendant addressed a few words to sir Dugald, who instantly turned about. "A carriage, said ye? where? am I blind, that I saw it not? I beg your pardon, Malcolm Hay, my dear young freend, and bid ye ten thousand welcomes to Dalmanzie. Introduce me till your freend, Malcolm—Wow! lad, ye used me

ill, not to have written to inform me that you would come accompanied. But a freend o' yours, my boy, shall aye be welcome to Dalmanzie and all that it contains."

He had now reached the carriage, from which I had alighted, and in which the king still sate. I performed the introductory ceremony. "Mr. Johnston," said the hospitable knight, extending his hand, "I bid you most heartily welcome; and am only sorry that ye did not come in time for this day's sport,—that is, if you're aught of a huntsman; for a finer run ne'er saw I, than we had after yonder stag, all the way from Innerkettrick to Chief's-burn-brae, and from that to Gartanscattacher along the river side to Balnabrownie, and from that along the skirts of Bennarue, every inch to the Gow's auld bridge, and thence to the parks of Dalmanzie. Why, sir, the dogs did not thrapple him a thousand yards from the spot you're standing on. It was a noble run! a noble run! I ne'er saw the like on't."

By the time that sir Dugald had detailed the

geography of the day's hunt to his guests, we were seated in the small parlour—the parlour of all works—to which I have already made allusion. For its size, it was a stately and imposing apartment. Like Dalmanzie,—like sir Dugald, it possessed a character distinctively its own. I will venture to assert that no other apartment in the three kingdoms could display an equal wealth of sporting trophies. Though small, it was lofty. "Mr. Johnston" looked up; and overhead it was so closely studded with innumerable branching antlers, the spoils of many a chase, that not a particle of the ceiling was visible. The effect was in a high degree unique, grotesque, and wild. A double range of antlered heads were thickly placed along the walls immediately beneath the cornice; and the pannels of the dark oak wainscot were chiselled by the hand of no unskilful artist, into representations, carved in bold relief, of the various tenants of the mountain and the forest, including those which have long since been extirpated from Britain,

such as elks and wolves, together with the yet existing animals of chase. The only decoration of a character different from these, was the family coat of the name of M'Laren, splendidly emblazoned on a shield that projected from the embattled oaken architrave of the only window in the room; a deeply sunk and stone shafted casement, with diamond panes of many-coloured glass. There were two silver sconces, of plain workmanship, but brightly burnished, over the mantel-piece; and two small silver lamps were suspended by chains of the same metal in the centre of the room, from the knotty antlers over head. The chairs were plain and heavy, and their well stuffed cushions were covered with green morocco leather that had evidently seen better days. The carpet was also much the worse for the wear, but it still held together, and contained no foot-traps. In the middle of the room stood a stout clumsy oaken table, covered with a faded crimson cloth, of such capacious dimensions that it swept the floor on every

side. Sir Dugald stepped to the door, and rang a loud hand-bell. Presently a servant appeared, of whose appearance "Mr. Johnston" had probably never seen a prototype. He was an ill favoured, strongly built, red-haired man, dressed in a suit of the M'Laren tartan; ample jacket, still more ample trews, and "a vest conform."

"When will dinner be ready?" demanded the famished sir Dugald.

"Cookie says in half an hour, sir."

"Why don't ye set about laying the table, then?"

The domestic instantly commenced arranging the table. He did not remove the crimson cover; but laid upon it a dinner cloth, which, like Luckie M'Cowie's, was transparently white. Damask napkins, steel-pronged forks of ancient date with richly embossed silver handles, knives of like workmanship, an antediluvian epergne, *outré*, no doubt, but at least *picturesque*, and a service of beautiful porcelain, composed the equipments of the dinner-

table. There were no goblet-glasses; but six chased silver goblets amply supplied the deficiency.

"Where are Mr. Duncan, and Mr. Dugald, and Mr. Ranald?" asked the knight.

"They're a' below, sir, seeing the beast cuttit up, and they winna leave the place at no rate till the last gash o' the knife."

"Do they know that Mr. Johnston and Mr. Hay are here?"

"Troth, sir, I canna say."

"They did not see the carriage, possibly—what were they saying when you were below stairs?"

"They were saying that Staunch and auld Bracklyn had cut their feet very badly, and that lang Jock suld see and doctor them, sir. Maister Ranald says he doots will Bracklyn e'er be fit to rin again."

"That would be a sad pity," said sir Dugald, "for Bracklyn was one of the best dogs in my kennel."

Mr. Johnston requested to be shown to his

dormitory, to change his dress before dinner. This was a ceremony that the inmates of Dalmanzie very seldom, if ever, observed. On returning to the parlour, we found dinner ready, and the knight and his sons assembled, in their scarlet *habits-de-chasse.* There was also a tall, thin gentleman, dressed in a closely buttoned suit of black: his name was announced as M'Quade. A general introduction took place, of such of the party as had not been previously known to each other, after which we all sat down to an excellent dinner. The fragrant steams that exhaled from the hare-soup, might have excited the astonishment and emulation of many a Parisian cuisinier.

I was just beginning to enjoy the delicious *potage*, when I suddenly felt my shins pricked with some sharp instrument. I winced with the pain, but said nothing at first. The pricking was however repeated in rapid succession. I started—withdrew my chair, and the torture I felt was expressed in my countenance.

"What ails ye, Malcolm?" asked the knight sympathetically.

"A vigorous assault has been made upon my shins, sir Dugald, by some unseen enemy under the table."

"Raise the cloth and see what it is," said sir Dugald, calmly.

I obeyed the knight, looked under the table, and beheld a little elvish tailor stitching away with prodigious diligence; and every stitch he had drawn inflicted a puncture on my shins, as long as I had remained within his reach.

"Why, sir Dugald," I exclaimed in astonishment, "you have got a tailor under the table!"

"I thought as much," replied the thrifty old knight, very coolly. "It is Rory M'Kettrick, frae Drumcallagher, making the bairns' trews and jackets."

"Under the table!" ejaculated I.

"Yes, under the table. We always put him there to keep him from pilfering the buttons, thread, or twist, or cabbaging the tartan; and

the card-cloth hides him well enough from morning visitors."

"But surely he has no business here under our legs?"

"Not the least, and it's an unco shame for M'Quade to have allowed him to stay here till this hour. Come, Rory, get up wi' yoursel out of that."

"Why, really, sir Dugald" —— said M'Quade.

"Do not try to apologise, sir," interrupted the knight; "your negligence does not admit of apology. You must have forgotten your duty, and quitted the room, instead of remaining here, where you could have kept a watch on Rory."

"Truly, sir Dugald, I but quitted the apartment to indoctrinate young master Charles in some portion of the classical rudiments."

"Eat your soup, and say nothing more about it, sir. You ought to have bestowed your indoctrinations on my grandson *here*, and well you know it. Come, Rory—I hope

you've the full complement of stuff there, and that you haven't cribbed any of it?"

Rory held up a half finished jacket, some thread, strips of tartan, and buttons, as if in self-exculpation.

"Where's the fustian lining?" said the knight.

"Here, honourable sir."

"Um — pretty right, I believe: leave the things upon that chair, and get out of the room as fast as you can."

Rory obeyed with great expedition.

"Mr. M'Quade," said sir Dugald, "I beg that I may never catch you tripping again in this manner. How came you to leave Rory here until we were all seated at dinner?"

M'Quade was sufficiently prudent to leave this inquiry unanswered; and the kind-hearted, though choleric sir Dugald, speedily recovered his good humour.

The fact was, I believe, that the tailor had fallen asleep at his post; the noise of laying dinner had wakened him; and then, to exhibit his extraordinary industry, he pierced at every

stitch the shins of the person at his elbow; which unfortunate mortal chanced to be myself. I had not the courage to encounter Mr. Johnston's eye; and I marvelled whether he yet repented his having visited Dalmanzie incognito.

"The honour of some wine, Mr. Johnston," said sir Dugald; "what wine do you choose?" (I should observe that the cellars of Dalmanzie could boast the three perfections ascribed by sir William Curtis to a model *winery*,—to wit, quality, quantity, and variety.)

"Barsac," replied Mr. Johnston.

Now, it chanced that there was not any Barsac in the parlour, although there were a great many dozen in the cellars; so that the hospitable knight committed the key, which he usually kept in his pocket, to Murdoch, his tartan-clad butler, at the same time desiring the said Murdoch to bring up two bottles. Meanwhile he pledged his guest in some other variety of wine; and then manœuvred to catch the eye of M'Quade, to whom he directed an intelligent

glance, which the worthy tutor interpreted as a command to follow Murdoch to the cellars, to see that he did not embezzle any portion of their contents.

M'Quade accordingly quitted the room for that purpose, but Murdoch was gifted with amazing celerity on occasions like the present.

Ere the tutor closed the parlour door behind him, the serving-man had already dived among the most recondite bowels of the cellarage; and thinking it pity to neglect such a glorious opportunity of exerting his talents for appropriation, he stole two bottles for himself; when, suddenly hearing M'Quade stalking down the freestone steps, he plunged the stolen bottles in the ample pockets of his tartan *trews*. Having thus secured the stolen wine, he locked the cellar door, and reascended to the parlour with the legitimate bottles in his hands; his footsteps closely watched all the while by M'Quade. Arrived in the parlour, he delivered up the keys, placed the Barsac on the table, and resumed his post

behind sir Dugald's chair, with his back to a very hot fire.

Now, as Old Nick would have it, the bottles with which honest Murdoch had intromitted, and which he had secreted in his trews, contained, *not* wine, as he fondly imagined, but high mettled ale of Mrs. Dougal M'Laren's manufacture. As soon, therefore, as the mettlesome liquid felt the effects of the neighbouring fire,—" Pop!" went one of the corks right through Murdoch's culottes, tearing tartan and fustian along with it, and making a report like a pistol-shot.

" What the deil's that?" cried sir Dugald, starting up on his feet, and surveying the shivering culprit.

" I dinna ken," answered Murdoch.

" But ye *do* ken," persisted the knight, " and I insist on hearing, sirrah."

Every soul present, not even excepting Mr. Johnston, stared at Murdoch with inquisitive astonishment; when " Pop!" went the second cork, flying through the opposite side of the

wretch's apparel, while the ale trickled quickly down his legs, and inundated the carpet at his feet.

"How happened this, ye fause loon?" demanded the knight.

"Dinna press me to expleen just at present," answered Murdoch, with ready wit.

"Why not, sirrah? I insist upon your speaking out."

"Aweel, honourable sir, if sae be your pleasure in the presence of your worshipful guests, ye canna wyte* *me;* although I wad nathless have rather postponed, until a mair befitting season, sae unsavoury an explanation as your honour is pleased to desiderate. The root o' the haill matter is, maist honoured sir, that having this morn ta'en an unco potential medicine"——

"Trundle yourself out of the room, you infernal scoundrel!" exclaimed the enraged knight, bestowing a tremendous kick on his

* *Wyte*, blame.

luckless domestic, " your lying excuses would provoke a saint. The fault must be yours, Mr. M'Quade—I'm sure I sent ye down to see that the reiving loon played no jookery-paukery among the wine; you are growing unco useless of late, sir."

" Truly, sir Dugald, I protest I saw not any intromission with your honour's vinous stores, on the part of the delinquent; the rather, that just as I descended the steps to the cellar, I was straightway confronted by that unfortunate person, who was then locking the door, and had only the two bottles of Barsac in his hands."

" Then, sir, you were deevilish slack. If your own wine was in question, you'd have long been sorry to let any Murdoch have his hand alane amang it. Call Patrick to sop up that wet, and now let's forget this daft business and finish our dinners."

We accordingly resumed the agreeable duties of mastication, which had been so grievously interrupted. Patrick now entered, and pro-

ceeded to wipe away the traces of Murdoch's mysterious explosion from the carpet; the liquor he pronounced to be "yill;" which discovery revealed to sir Dugald's somewhat perplexed apprehension, the true state of the case. He threatened awful vengeance on the culprit. "Yill—how sairly he lacked yill, indeed. But I promise him he shall brew a sair browst for it yet.—Come, Mr. Johnston, allow me to help you to some of this venison; ye'll find it excellent;" &c., &c.

The worthy knight performed all the hospitable duties, which, to him, were a labour of love, with a dignity that well became his table. Mr. Johnston seemed to like his wine, which was unquestionably excellent, and to relish the venison of the mountains which had passed through the hands of an accomplished Highland culinary artist. I began to hope that the evening would pass off without further interruption, when suddenly an overpowering burst of deafening discord, close behind his chair, came unawares on Mr. Johnston—all

Babel seemed let loose on his devoted head; he sprang from his chair, and clapped his hands upon his ears, exclaiming—

"Grand ciel! mais qu'est ce que cette tintamarre?"

"What? you a Scotchman, and not like the pipes?" said Sir Dugald reproachfully.

"Ah, but you will consider sir, I have been much in France."

"Allan," said the knight, waving his hand, "don't play any more; indeed you indulged us much too soon, at all events, for you never ought to enter the room until dinner is removed."

But Allan, instead of obeying, blew louder and louder; till his face became purple, and his swoln veins like sausages.

"Why don't you stop, sir, when I command you?" cried sir Dugald, starting up, and surveying his chief piper angrily.

The chief piper merely answered by producing such a hurricane of screaming, roaring, jarring, stunning, and discordant noises as I

never heard before, and most devoutly hope I never may hear again.

"At any rate it's beautiful! most beautiful—is it not, Hay?" said Ranald M'Laren, as his eye glistened with unfeigned admiration of the stormy strains of the chief piper.

"Can't say I ever liked music very much," said I, drily.

"That's an unco shame for you, Malcolm; they have music in heaven, you know."

"Such as that?" demanded I.

"Dootless, dootless, mon."

"Ah, my dear Ranald, I think you are mistaken there," said I.

"Mistaken! surely no," said Ranald; "for what can be finer than the pipes?"—I feel convinced that Ranald would have far preferred them to the music in the Sistine Chapel.

During this little by-play, sir Dugald, perceiving the excruciating torture that the music of Allan inflicted on the nerves of Mr. Johnston, had imperatively repeated his commands

for silence, but with just as little chance as before of enforcing obedience.

"Why d'ye no stop when the chief bids ye?" asked Patrick.

Allan out-boreas'd all the Highland pipers that ever had inflated sheepskin. In that small apartment it was really intolerable torture.

"Truly, he is a rare proficient in pneumatical exercises," said M'Quade, with an air of competent criticism.

"Truly, he is drunk!" said Duncan M'Laren, who had approached quite close to the musician. Duncan was right; Allan had become what topers term "glorious;" and, exalted to the sublime and fearless altitudes of inebriety, he cared as little for sir Dugald as for the tinkler's messan.

"Drunk, is he?" said sir Dugald; "then that must be all *your* fault, Mr. M'Quade. You know, sir, I've given it strictly in charge to you to see that the retainers of the household who approach our presence should never be

allowed to get fou at irregular hours; and I do most particularly beg, that in future I may not so often catch you tripping. All o' ye, lads, heave Allan out. Mr. Johnston, I really beg ten thousand pardons."

But Mr. Johnston heard not one word that was uttered, although all the speakers bellowed at the top of their lungs throughout the whole conversation, (if conversation be a proper term to bestow on the snap-talk that was volleyed across the table,) for Allan's pipes deafened him so effectually, that even for several minutes after the minstrel was hustled off, he still fancied that he heard the dreadful charivari close behind him; and twice or thrice he turned round to assure himself of his tormentor's absence, with some such involuntary exclamation as, "Mais où est il? ah, he is gone—right, right—I am very glad."

Suddenly a kicking and struggling was heard in the hall.

"But I tell ye I *will* go back," said the voice of the chief piper, in reply to some re-

monstrance; "it wad be scandalous! maist scandalous! the like ne'er was heard at Dalmanzie for a thoosand years, as that gentlefolk o' worship suld sit in the knight's ha' birling, without a lilt to do them honour. I winna be restrained, I tell ye."

"What is all this riot?" said sir Dugald, going to the door.

"Truly, sir, it is Allan, who is minded to come back," said M'Quade, popping in his head.

"That is all *your* fault, sir. If you had locked him up when you brought him away, he could not return to torment us. Have him off, and let me hear no more about him, I desire ye."

I soon perceived that M'Quade was a species of general scape-goat, who was held responsible for every variety of contretemps. After this last alarm, we were not disturbed any more. The door was shut, and we all drew our chairs about the fire.

"Any thing new stirring in Edinburgh?" said sir Dugald.

"Indeed, sir, the town seemed rather full last week. Lord Wemyss has been giving some brilliant entertainments, which added to our gaiety considerably."

"Ah, I like that auld earl, and also Lord Caithness. Like two douce, sonsie, honest, patriotic Scottish nobles, they reside entirely in auld Scotland, and keep their city residences in Auld Reekie *, instead of running off like sae mony of their class to London, and depriving their native metropolis of its 'decus et tutamen.' Pray, Malcolm, do these French folks at Holyrood create any stir?"

"Why, sir, it were hard to look for gaiety from exiles."

"And that's true, too," said sir Dugald, musingly. "Can you tell me if the king would have any objection that I should be presented to him?"

"I can scarcely answer you," said I, "without previously consulting his majesty; but I think it highly probable that he will not have

* In Queen Street, Edinburgh.

any objection. He has received my father very graciously, and also Dunsneath."

"O, that is easily accounted for, as you are in his majesty's service, and Flora Douglas in the duchess of Angoulême's."

"But, he has also received several other Scottish gentlemen of condition," observed Mr. Johnston.

"Have *you*, sir, the honour of being known to the king?" said sir Dugald, turning to Mr. Johnston.

"I never saw his majesty's face, sir Dugald."

"The papers said, some time since," observed the knight, "that the king had some notion of visiting the Highlands, but I believe that plan was given up. 'Tis long since our mountains saw the face of royalty, and the last time they did so, it was under heart-breaking circumstances."

"You mean the '45," said Mr. Johnston.

"Ay, that ill-starred appeal to ancient loyal faith," replied the knight. "Prince Charles unfurled the standard of king James the Third

among us bravely—Ah! my auld father fought in the cause like a lion—but the destinies that rule over nations, decreed our defeat. Well —God's will be done!"

"And do you regret the result at this distant period?"

Sir Dugald answered not in words, but shook his head slowly, mournfully, and expressively.

"The old race is now extinct," said Mr. Johnston.

"Ay," replied sir Dugald, with a sigh, "and I can cry 'God save king William the Fourth,' as truly and zealously as any other subject in his kingdom. Thrones and empires will rise, and flourish for their appointed season; they will crumble into ruins when that season is past, and 'the place thereof be no more seen.' But amidst the wreck of dynasties, and of ancient and venerable institutions, it is still a solace to preserve a faithful and unstained allegiance to our native country. The child of the mountain best loves his wild home; no

tongue can tell how dearly, how intensely, a Highlander loves Scotland; and, oh! sir, *if* he loves her, surely the remembrance of the auld royal blood of Scotland will be twined among his heart-strings, as long as his heart beats!"

"That man has a soul, and a high soul," said I to myself, "in spite of all his oddities. He is a fine old fellow for seventy!"

"I heard a long and doleful ditty chaunted last night at Glenquiddart," said Mr. Johnston, "of which the subject was chiefly the misfortunes of the Stuarts."

"Ah, by that queer creature, Sandy," said Duncan M'Laren; "he is quite inexhaustible; every time I chance to go there he has a new composition of some kind. Do you know him, father?"

"I do—*right well*," replied sir Dugald, with a manner that seemed to imply something more than the mere casual knowledge to be acquired from meeting the poet at Bessie M'Cowie's, as we had done the preceding night.

I was desirous to enquire from sir Dugald the

particulars of the old minstrel's history, which I felt a conviction was curious, or at least unusual; but I refrained from doing so, as it struck me that it would somewhat resemble a breach of confidence to learn his story from any one except himself, after the conversation that had passed between us tête-à-tête over Luckie M'Cowie's kitchen fire.

The evening wore jovially away; but coffee was served long before a single member of our party could have verged on inebriety.

CHAPTER X.

THE DORMITORY.

When bed-time arrived, I accompanied Mr. Johnston to his dormitory, a large and comfortably furnished room, with an ancient crimson bed, japanned wardrobes, and two stuffed arm-chairs flanking the brightly blazing hearth.

The king threw himself into one of the chairs, motioned to me to take my seat in the other, looked steadily in my face, and smiled. "Eh bien, Malcolm!" said he.

"I fear, sir," said I, "that you have repented of your incognito long since. I told you that you would sustain some inconvenience."

"And you think I regret my incognito? Why, I must confess that when he who made

that terrible noise was making me deaf this evening, I could have wished on any terms to escape the *tintamarre.* But that is all past now, and sir Dugald will not allow that terrible man to make his noise again while I remain here. I had a headache at first, but the coffee has removed it."

"I do not think, sir, that you would ever learn to admire the bagpipe."

"Ah, it has not fair play within doors. It is not disagreeable as one hears it in Edinburgh. About two miles off I should think it would sound very well, in calm weather."

"What does your"——

"Prenez garde, Malcolm!"

"What do you think, sir, of our host, sir Dugald?"

"O, I like him much—he is a fine old chevalier. Just heaven! how he loves the memory of the Stuarts. Ah, Malcolm, Malcolm, it is traits such as these that make a deep impression on the heart of such as I am. I

was *touché, bien touché,* when your sir Dugald spoke of his father's unfortunate prince, and I could not help asking myself whether, after an equal lapse of time, *our* name would call forth such affectionate remembrance from any in France." His majesty sighed bitterly, and seemed lost in painful thought. At length, resuming a more cheerful appearance, he observed that whenever sir Dugald should visit him at Holyrood, he would make the old knight heartily welcome.

"Yes, sir," said I; "but only conceive the confusion to which poor sir Dugald will be exposed, when, on approaching your presence, he will recognise Mr. Johnston! Mr. Johnston, who witnessed the expulsion of the tailor from under the dinner-table—the explosion of Murdoch—and who was stunned with the persevering strains of Allan, the bagpiper! Ah, the poor knight will feel strangely embarrassed! I compassionate him by anticipation!"

The king smiled at the woful confusion that

sir Dugald would probably sustain; but said that he would know how to help the brave old chevalier out of his embarrassment.

A tap at the bedroom door.

"Entrez toujours," said Mr. Johnston.

Sir Dugald entered.

"I have come, Mr. Johnston," said the knight, "to hope ye have every thing comfortable.—In the new fangled fashions, *that* 's all left to some o' the menzie, I hear, to take care of; but in *my* day, the master of the house gave an eye to the comforts of his guests, and deemed it no disparagement. That 's the custom of Dalmanzie still, sir."

"I thank you extremely, sir Dugald," replied Mr. Johnston, rising from his chair, "and feel deeply touched with your kindness; every thing, indeed, appears most comfortable."

"Ah, sir, if you're given to dreaming, this room should inspire you with nightly fantasies. That bed in which you are to sleep, sir, has a history.—Do you see the royal crown of Scot-

land worked in gold upon the velvet canopy? Sir, a head once reposed in this bed that should have worn that crown.—*Prince Charlie slept here, sir, in* 1745—and so gude night t' ye."

"I wish you a good night, sir Dugald."

The knight, having satisfied his hospitable anxieties, withdrew; and we heard him half whistling, half singing, as he proceeded along the corridor, the old Jacobite air,—

> "Come weal, come wo,
> We'll gather and go,
> And live or die for Charlie."

"Yes," said the ex-monarch, as he retired to repose for the night, "*one* royal wanderer has already laid his wearied head and aching heart to rest upon this couch, and now it is sought by *another*. O God!" he continued with thrilling solemnity, "in THY hands are the hearts of kings; in THY hands are our destinies; let not the brief remnant of my life be embittered with wasting, carking care, or

vain regrets for the earthly splendours I have lost! Fix my thoughts upon imperishable glory; guide my soul to THEE!"

His lips moved in prayer for some minutes, and when he once more raised his voice, the only words I heard, were, "Into THY hands I commend my vexed and wearied spirit."

I certainly felt deeply, intensely affected; the parallel between his lot, and the exiled fortunes of the Stuarts, took a painful hold on my imagination. I offered up a fervent petition for his welfare both in soul and body, and retired to my own apartment, which communicated with his by a small oaken door.

I tried to rest, but the effort was fruitless. There are times when excitement of the spirits, for which we cannot, perhaps, discover any adequate cause, will effectually scare sleep from our eyelids. The hour of midnight boomed from the old clock-tower; still I slept not. The hour of one flung its sullen, solitary clang to the night wind; I heard the iron notes

of two and three successively pealed, and still I turned myself restlessly in bed, seeking sleep with a feverish impatience that helped to defeat its own object. I rose, and gently opening the casement, looked out upon the dark and frosty night, in the hope that its chillness might allay the sleepless fever of my spirits. I had wrapped my cloak about me closely, and leaned for several minutes on the window sill. At length a dim streak of light broke through the darkness of the heavens; it increased, and soon the moon rose, huge and red, behind a hill clothed with oak copse. I watched her gradual progress, as she slowly sailed upwards, when my ear was startled by a low, repeated moaning from the king's apartment. I immediately quitted the casement, and entered the king's dormitory; the light which flashed from the decaying fire on the hearth, revealed the uneasy movements of his person; he struggled in his sleep as if in pain, and imperfect sounds escaped his lips, among which I could discern

the words, "Mais non—mais non—il ne sera pas ainsi;" and he then suddenly started up, as if awaking from a hideous dream.

"Dieu merci!" he exclaimed, when thoroughly awake,—"then it *was* but a dream." And he sighed long and deeply, as though some heavy weight had been removed from his heart. "I would Malcolm were with me, but I shall not waken the poor faithful garçon."

"Sir, I am here," said I, gently.

"What! have you then been watching me?"

"I heard you moaning in your sleep, sir, and I felt uneasy."

"Oh, Malcolm, it is a relief to hear a human voice, after such a dream as I have had; it is foolish to suffer such a circumstance to prey upon the spirits, yet human nature cannot always resist these impressions. I shall tell you what I dreamt," said he, "when I am a little composed."

And he remained silent, for some minutes, and then resumed in French;—

"I thought that the ancient regalia of Scotland were spread before my eyes, the crown, the royal sword and sceptre; and as I was proceeding to examine them, my hand was arrested by a grasp of such icy chillness as pierced the very marrow in my bones. I turned in horror, and beheld Prince Charles Edward Stuart, clad in the habiliments of the grave: his face was as white as marble, and his large, mournful eye was sternly fixed upon me with a glassy and unearthly glare. I tried to disengage my hand, but in vain; the chilling pressure was increased, until I moaned with torture. He then slowly quitted his hold, and his tall, noble form stood before me, ghastly in its dress and attitude: a white fold of linen enveloped the head, but its whiteness was not greater than that of the pale forehead beneath it.

"'Charles Bourbon,' said he,—(and O! Malcolm, his clear, melancholy voice smote my ear like a funeral bell,)—'I am come to warn you. In the days of my mortality, I

cherished projects similar to those which now actuate *you;* I stirred up the loyal spirits of this kingdom to embrace my cause. I held my councils in this castle—in this chamber;—nay, old king! I spent many sleepless nights on the very couch on which you now repose.

"'Eighty-seven years have passed since then, and for the greater portion of that period I have lain in the grave. O! it is the mysterious world beyond the tomb, that best teaches us what very nothings are the baubles that we struggle for!

"'Torrents of noble blood were poured out in my quarrel, yet it all availed not. As it hath been with *our* race, so shall it also be with *thine.* What ye have lost, ye never shall recover. Avoid, then, the misfortune into which *we* fell, of suffering the vain and sinful shedding of human blood. Behold these memorials of my royal race, these ancient regalia. I sought to repossess them while I was in life. Behold *now,* the value which that stern moni-

tor, Death, has taught my immortal spirit to place upon them.'

"And, as he spoke these words, he touched the sword and sceptre, and forthwith they flew into fragments; he raised the crown to his head, as if about to place it on the linen roll that overshadowed his forehead.

"'Once,' said he, 'I struggled hard to place this here,—but NOW'—

"And he crushed the crown as you would crush a scroll of paper.

"'I have given you my warning,' said he; 'your time is brief on earth; we shall meet, perhaps, beyond the grave.'—He seemed to linger, as if unwilling to depart, when an hundred low and mournful voices called his name, as if from the bowels of the earth. 'I come! I come!' he answered, and the floor of the apartment assumed the appearance of the monumental pavement of a cemetery; he turned, fixed on me once more his calm, cold, piercing, melancholy eye, and then disappeared through

a vault whose iron barriers opened to receive him."

"Your dream, sire," said I, "was manifestly suggested by sir Dugald's having told you that Prince Charles once occupied this room."

"Perhaps so, Malcolm, but yet I confess that it has strangely disturbed me; the impression was so thrillingly vivid; the gaze of the vision so piercing, so steady; the clear, knelling tones of his sad voice so painfully real—they ring in my ears at this moment."

"Compose yourself to sleep, sir," said I; "I shall sit here and watch you."

"No, my poor fellow; you shall not lose your rest: and as for me, I could not sleep. I shall try and compose myself by prayer. Can you light the lamp?" I succeeded in doing so, although with some difficulty, as the embers were now almost decayed. I drew aside the curtain of the bed, placed a table with the lamp by its side; handed the king a manual of prayer, in which he soon was deeply buried, and retired to my own apartment.

CHAPTER XI.

A TANTALIZING COLLOQUY.

"Is there, then," I mentally inquired, "aught prophetic in the visions of slumber? has not the holy Scripture intimated that dreams may come from God? I have certainly never put faith in them myself, nor would I encourage others to do so; yet it seems to me that the powerful impression which some of these phantasms leave on the imagination, may be turned to advantage."

As I thus ruminated, caring far more for the king than for the abstract philosophy of dreams, I perceived that I had left the casement open,

and was about to close it, when my ear was caught by the sound of voices without. I listened, much marvelling who could be abroad at that wild hour. Two figures walked leisurely along a sort of terrace that bordered the castle; the moon shone full upon them, and showed that the dress of *one* was that of the ordinary southland peasantry.

"And do you think it will ever succeed?" were the first words I heard; uttered in tones that certainly belonged to no roturier.

"Ow—it 's hard to say, but the auld cock says he'll do his best."

"And do you suppose he *will* keep his word? there 's no doubt that he *can*, if he likes."

"Nay, sir, I suld think his disposition was greater than his power; for the ither is a dour, stour chield, that 's as sulky as a mule and as spitefu' as the deil. I can tell ye that ere *he* gies up a point, he'll have a scramble."

"Oh!" said the first speaker, clasping his

hands with great earnestness, "I promise you he *shall* meet his match in obstinacy."

"Troth, sir, I muckle fear he winna meet his match; for the tither (wi' reverence be it said) is sae full of his ballants, and auld warld ditties and songs, that it 's e'en ower hard, I fear, to work him to the top of his bent."

Ballads, and auld warld ditties and sangs! Bless my soul, thought I, can it be possible they are speaking of that strange genius, Sandy M'Dow?

"I'll tell you what will work him up to any effort," returned the first speaker; "the necessity of the case, and the goodness of his heart."

"And ye're e'en right there, sir, I daur say: needcessity is dootless a strang plea, and a gude heart is surely a persuasive advocate. And his heart *is* gude, and vera gude—God bless him!"

"I'm in doubt, like yourself, as to the final result; but I hope the best; and, Pate, as far

as *I* can work, I won't spare myself. When did you see him?"

"This vera morning, sir; that was the road I cam frae Gartanstown, kenning your honour's anxiety to hear aboot a' things."

"Well, you've been long on the road, but we met opportunely. They sat up very late at the old laird's, and they kept me there till two hours after midnight—we were all very merry; they wanted me to sleep there, but I felt so eager to see a certain person in the morning, that I determined on returning here to-night. I hope we may manage to get into the castle without making much noise."

I had, long ere *this* period of the dialogue, fully recognised the patrician speaker; but his conversation was a perfect mystery. Sometimes I thought I could faintly see my way through his meaning, but presently afterwards I found myself involved as completely as ever in darkness. His companion now tapped with the end of a long switch at a window pretty high above his head, which belonged, he said,

to the dormitory of some of the menzie; the tapping was repeated until the slumberer within was aroused, and the two nocturnal wanderers were admitted forthwith into the castle. I returned to my bed, and soon fell into the arms of that capricious god, Sleep, who had coyed it so long and so unpleasantly.

CHAPTER XII.

WE STILL SOJOURN AT DALMANZIE.—THE JUNIORS.—THE DOMINIE'S ELYSIUM.—WE WITNESS A SOLEMN AND IMPRESSIVE CEREMONY.

THE following morning, the king, who was harassed and exhausted, was unable to appear at the breakfast table.

"Well, Malcolm, my dear bairn," said the good old knight, "how fares it with ye? I hope you slept well last night, and also that your freend, auld Mr. Johnston did—but how does it happen that the auld gentleman does not feel able to come down to breakfast?"

"He was tired, sir, after yesterday's journey."

"No wonder—no wonder. It is not every auld chap that is as stout at seventy as I am. I never had a day's sickness all my life, which

I chiefly ascribe to my habits of exercise in the open air."

"Who is for coursing to-day?" asked Ranald. "I am going out to Chief's-burn-brae to try the new greyhounds."

"I don't care if I go with you," said Duncan.

"Will *you* come, Malcolm Hay?"

"No, my friends; I must stay here and attend Mr. Johnston."

"Pshaw, can't the servants bring him any thing he wants?" said young Dugald. "He is not king of France, that you need dance such constant attendance after him. Between close attendance on his majesty at Holyrood, Malcolm, and auld Johnston, here, you'll be quite deprived of exercise and amusement."

"Don't speak in that manner, Dugald," said the knight; "you'll be an auld man yourself if you live long enough, and right glad to enjoy the affectionate attentions of the young; your father 's an auld man, sir; and I honour Malcolm for the care and affection that he shews his friend; it does him credit."

The door now opened, and Sholto Douglas (Flora's brother) entered.

"Ah, ye thieving birkie," said sir Dugald, "how cannily you slipped away from Dalmanzie yesterday!"

"Well, sir, I have repaired my fault, you see, by returning as quickly as I possibly could."

Sholto greeted me warmly; he had been staying for several days at Dalmanzie, and I easily saw by his manner, that his reappearance had been very much hastened by the prospect of meeting me, as sir Dugald had told him of my promised visit. When the young M'Larens had quitted the room after breakfast, in quest of their various amusements, I strolled out with Sholto to the terrace upon which the window of my dormitory looked.

"You were sauntering late here last night, or rather this morning, I believe," said I; "what a sad night-walker you have grown, Sholto."

"How do you know that?" said Sholto, looking in my face with much curiosity.

"Moreover, it was by tapping at that window," continued I, pointing out the window, "that you and your very conversable companion obtained admission into the castle."

"Why, Malcolm, you must have been looking at us?"

"And now," said I, "will you gratify a piece of impertinent curiosity of mine?—I know it is impertinent, but still I feel impelled to ask the question—you need not answer it, unless you like. Was the personage described by your comrade as being 'ower fond of his auld warld ballants, and ditties, and sangs,' Sandy M'Dow, the minstrel at Glenquiddart?"

"I will *not* answer you, Malcolm," said Sholto, reddening; "and I beg as a favour, that since by some means, inconceivable to me, you have obtained a knowledge of our conversation, you may not again allude to the subject."

"My limited knowledge of what passed on the terrace," said I, "is easily accounted for;" and I briefly explained to him that I was standing at my open casement; detailing, at the same time, the restlessness from which I had sustained such inconvenience, and the king's dream, which had given his majesty so much uneasiness.

"By the way," said Sholto, "will not Mr. Johnston think I am *de trop* here, as he is aware I know his person?"

"Not in the least, I am sure, for he is also aware he can depend on your discretion."

"How long does Mr. Johnston mean to stay here?" asked Sholto.

"Not more than a few days; my own invitations from sir Dugald are always *ad libitum*. Mr. Johnston accompanied me, as if impromptu."

An iron door at the end of the terrace opened, and M'Quade walked in, followed by sir Dugald's grandchildren, who were under his classical care. The boys were strong built,

extremely handsome, and their countenances highly intelligent for their ages; the eldest did not seem more than twelve. M'Quade walked in front, with an ancient Corderius in his left hand, and an awe-inspiring ferule in his right. In his pockets were stored both French and Latin grammars, dictionaries, and elementary works. The eldest child spoke French with all the ease and fluency of a native, for his mother, who was recently dead, had been a Frenchwoman, and had accustomed him to speak it from infancy; he was the son of Duncan M'Laren; the other children were his cousins. The tutor and his flock proceeded to an arbour which fronted the sun, and in which the children had importuned permission to say their lessons. They took their seats round a table, and M'Quade, who did not seem to relish out-of-door duties in such weather, pulled a furry travelling cap over his ears, put a pipe in his mouth, and began to smoke with infinite diligence.

"Bad substitute this for a warm fire side,"

muttered he, "but it's better than naething, however. I wanted not to quit the school-room, but the bairns have their way in every thing, and their grandsire says 'twill make them hardy. Come, young gentlemen,—are your exercises ready? show me the Latin translation f the English fables I desired ye to write; eh, Mr. Charles?"

A dexterous traffic in marbles, and half-munched apples, seemed in rapid progress under the table, between master Charles and his cousin Duncan.

"What's that ye're pushing at under the table, boys?" inquired M'Quade.

"Don't shove me, Charlie—you're taking up more than your share of the form." The push with which this admonition was accompanied, formed an admirable opportunity for the transfer of a few more marbles.

"Come, come, young gentlemen; this work won't answer at all. *Non adhuc est tempus ludendi* — Can ye English me that, Mr. Charlie?"

"It means that there 's nothing so pleasant as play, sir."

"Nay, sir, you should truly be ashamed to have rendered your instructor sae exceedingly indoctrinate an answer. What must these bystanding gentlemen, who are doubtless deeply grounded in classical lore, deem of your acquirements—what, of the ability or attention of your teacher? And lest they should fondly imagine that so signal a subversion of the true and literal meaning of the classical phrase I gave you to translate, should pass unrewarded with its meet deserts, thereby indicating a culpability of negligence on my part, I command ye, Mr. Charlie, to extend your hand in order that you may receive upon your digits a pandy from my ferula, as is befitting."

"Which hand, sir?" inquired the culprit.

"I care not—dexter or sinister—take your choice."

Charlie extended his left hand; and while the teacher waved the circling ferula in awful preparatory whirls, the urchin, who was pro-

bably unrivalled all over the world as a marble-shot, jerked one of his marbles from the fore-finger and thumb of his right hand, which hung at his side unsuspiciously, right against the cheek-bone of Mr. M'Quade, inflicting a startling contusion on that personage, which elicited a yell of mingled astonishment and pain. The guilty arm of Charlie hung so apparently motionless, that the tutor's suspicion never fastened for an instant on him; he turned to the other boys, who all successively denied the commission of the outrage. They were instantly searched, and marbles found in all their pockets *except Charlie's*, whose missile of mischief was the only one he had remaining. M'Quade vowed terrible vengeance; but as Sholto and I were appealed to, and bore clear evidence exculpatory of every one of the boys save the real culprit, *regarding whom no inquiry was made*, the tutor withheld the application of the birch, contenting himself with a whacking pandy upon Charlie's hand-

sinister, in penalty of the young gentleman's grammatical delinquencies.

"Come now, maister Duncan," (Duncan was the French lady's son,) "show us here your Latin translations—hand up your Latin version of the Fable of the Fox and the Crow, sir—immediately."

The Latin translation was produced, and conned over by the tutor with apparent approbation, until he arrived at a passage that seemed to disturb his equanimity.

"The English version I gave you runs thus, sir," said M'Quade: "'*and the crow said to the fox*, What *do you want?*' Why, sir, you haven't put the crow's query into Latin—ye've given it in French, sir. I won't allow such tricks and vagaries.—Look here, Mr. Sholto Douglas, at the capers of this tyro—here's a decent Latin exercise to hand a teacher! '*Et dixit corvus ad vulpem, Que voulez vous!*' What reason, sir, can you assign," continued M'Quade, with an awful flourish of the

ferula, "for thus daftly and inappropriately thrusting French into the mouth of the crow?"

"Because," replied Duncan, very meekly, "it was a French crow, that didn't understand one syllable of Latin, 'pon my honour!"

The perfect naïveté of Duncan's answer entirely upset M'Quade, who flung down his ferula, laughing; and at the same time shaking his fist, as he said, "Ye're a daft buckie, sir—a daft buckie! I don't beat ye, just because the rest of your exercise was perfect—but hold a care that I find no repetition for the future, of these leeberties with the classical tongues. If I do, you know there 's birch and ferula in readiness."

Sholto and I walked away, and left the tutor and his pupils to settle their disputes between them. In the course of the day, however, I took an opportunity of lecturing Charlie on the gross impropriety of which he had been guilty, in shooting off the marble at his teacher; he seemed struck with my remonstrances, and

deeply penitent for his fault, which he promised me he never would repeat.

"Heaven help poor tutors!" thought I: "they have not a very felicitous employment. The improvement of the 'young idea' is one of the most troublesome jobs in the universe: to none, except a tender parent or an affectionate friend, can it possibly afford a remunerating interest."

Immediately on quitting the teacher and his wayward pupils, I had gone to render my services to Mr. Johnston. I found him considerably better; but he said that he would not go down stairs until dinner time.

"As for you, dear Malcolm," said he, "I insist on your making yourself happy with Sholto and your other young friends; I must not suffer you to shut yourself up with me. Besides, I shall not be alone; for sir Dugald has good-naturedly offered to sit with me, at which I am extremely glad; for doubtless the excellent and kind-hearted old knight is an original richly well worth studying."

And sir Dugald *did* come, and sat the whole day with his guest; who was so charmed with the knight's old Jacobite anecdotes, his strong loyal feelings, the occasional bizarreries that marked his character, and more than all, the manifest and overflowing goodness of his heart, which recognized a brother or a sister in every human being,—that by the time the horn for dinner sounded, the host and guest were as intimate as if they had known each other half a century.

The following day we witnessed an impressive and singular ceremony. It was the anniversary of the death of sir Dugald's mother, who had died about fifty years before. It was observed as a fast by the family, (who belonged to the episcopal persuasion;) and in the evening, we all repaired to the chapel of the castle, where the aged clergyman of the knight's congregation was in readiness to perform the religious offices, assisted by one or two brethren, and a small, though well-trained choir.

Lady M'Laren had expressed in her will, her anxious desire for the observance of this ceremonial; and sir Dugald, who to his other excellent qualities added the warmest filial attachment, had annually complied with his parent's injunctions ever since.

The chapel was completely hung with black. On a trestle in the centre of the chancel lay the coffin, which was taken from the family vault beneath; it was richly carved, and made of Spanish chestnut wood, but its form and decorations were now shrouded in a sable pall.

The coffin, on the present occasion, was used as an altar; for on it were placed two large silver-clasped volumes, and two large waxen lights. The margins of the open books were black, and so were the candles. I never saw a scene of more impressive, solemn, and sepulchral gloom.

The old clergyman knelt, and occupied himself for a very few minutes in silent prayer; he then rose, and standing by the altar-coffin, read from the Bible, Saint Paul's magnificent

description of the resurrection. He then offered up a petition for the weal of all the human race; after which he recited a particular prayer, that "*she* whose mortal relics were among us, might have perfect consummation and bliss, with all who were departed in the faith.

"Fifty years," he said, "were that day passed, since the (umwhile) honourable person whose mortal anniversary we were met to celebrate, had been called before the bar of HIM in whose sight a thousand years are but as a day. Fifty years! To us, poor evanescent mortals, how long that period seemed in prospect; but how short it appeared in the retrospect! The silent inmate of the coffin had now passed that period in eternity; and yet, the roll of future ages opened as interminably still before her, as if she had only that instant departed from among us. My brethren," continued the old divine, "let not the scoffer say that this is a vain or fruitless ceremony. It tells us in a language more impressively eloquent than

words, that the life of the world to come, is the only life whereof a Christian man should take much heed. Here are the cold, mouldering relics of mortality; the space of a reasonable human span hath passed away since the spirit enlivened them. Coeval friends, contemporaries, all have long since dropped into the tomb; and those who were young when this honourable person died, are now themselves aged. Here are, indeed, the 'dry bones;' but the spirit liveth,—yea, still liveth, and will live for ever. Does this consideration teach us no lesson? O, yes, it does—and let us take to heart the instruction that it offers. Let us lay up treasure for the time when our bodies (whereanent we take peradventure overmuch care) shall thus lie mouldering into dust; let us lay up that treasure which the never-dying spirit shall enjoy, 'where moth and rust corrupt not, and where thieves break not in to steal.'

"May the Lord show his light and his mercy to the soul of this our Christian sister;

and may He give unto us, poor wandering sinners, grace to follow in the footsteps of Him who is the fountain and ensample of all righteousness."

The choristers, who occupied a gallery over the entrance, now chaunted a wild and melancholy dirge. It was set in a minor key; and the sweet and wailing voices, meeting, crossing, blending,—threading with exquisite skill the mazy labyrinths of harmony,—were in perfect unison with our mournful and solemn feelings.

When the dirge was ended, some attendants proceeded to open a trap-door near the altar rails, through which to lower the coffin to the vault.

Sir Dugald, who had been standing near the coffin's head during the service, approached it, and laid his hand upon it, just as the bearers were preparing to replace it in its dark abode.

I heard him whisper to himself in a tone of intense emotion, "Fare ye weel, auld mother, for another year; peradventure we may meet sooner."—A tear glistened in the eye of the

rugged old knight; he saw that I perceived it.

"You wonder, Malcolm," he said in a very low voice, "to see me thus moved, when it 's now sae long since SHE departed. But what are fifty years, as the good divine said, to eternity? She was the fond, loving parent, guide, and friend of my infancy, my childhood, and my youth: my love for her will wear through eternity. I could say, like another fond son that we read of, 'When *I* forget the auld mother of my early days,'" (and the knight squeezed my hand very hard, while his utterance was choked with emotion,) "'then, may my GOD forget *me*.'"

"You should not imprecate," said I.

"Nor do I, my young freend; but even if I did in this case, I should hardly lose the forfeit; the contingency is all but impossible."

The coffin was lowered; the iron trap-door closed; and the aged divine accompanied us into the castle. When I reached the door of the chapel, I turned to gaze upon the sombre

scene; two attendants were bearing the large black tapers through a distant postern; a faint gleam of light flickered for a single moment upon that house of sable gloom; the door was then closed, leaving all in utter darkness.

Sir Dugald retired immediately, and did not reappear in the parlour for the remainder of the night.

CHAPTER XIII.

DUNSNEATH IS PERVERSE.—SANDY AGAIN.—MUSIC AND PERPLEXITY.

THE next day Sholto informed me that he had received a letter from Flora. "She tells me, Malcolm," said he, "that her father has discovered your addresses, and vows awful vengeance on her if she lends a favourable ear to them. He talks of the hereditary feud between our houses, just as if he thought that Flora was an idiot to believe such nonsense. Undoubtedly there *was* some such feud in ruder times, but that does not actuate him now. No, no—I believe I can guess how matters stand. But only think! a hereditary feud

trumped up in the nineteenth century, as a reason why a lady should refuse a young gentleman's hand! Why it scarcely would be more absurd, to walk into a modern drawing room, armed cap-a-pie in the iron harness of the fourteenth century. No,—it is not a hereditary hatred, but a *personal dislike*, that *my* father entertains against *yours*, and I think I know the cause. But n' importe, my dear fellow—you shall win and wear Flora, in spite of the whole world, if *I* can work it out; and I flatter myself that you will find me no contemptible ally. I trust to be of use to you as soon as I return from France; until then I cannot do as much as I could wish. I sail in a few days, to look after an old French legacy, which I fear will turn out to be a very visionary affair; but my father insists on my going to Paris to inquire about it."

I shook his hand in silent gratitude; my heart was too full for utterance.

The king remained a few days longer at Dalmanzie, at the expiration of which period

he bade Sir Dugald a cordial, nay, an affectionate farewell, and proceeded to Edinburgh by the route we had taken on our previous journey.

On arriving at Glenquiddart, which we did about five in the afternoon, we found the poetical violinist enthroned upon his three-legged stool in the ingle-neuk.

Sandy rose, with joy sparkling in his eyes, and bade us a respectful welcome. "Wow, sirs, but I'm blythe to see ye again; I was amaist afraid I suld no hae that pleasure."

I took my seat at Sandy's side; and Mr. Johnston, equally disposed as heretofore to enjoy the strains of this singular minstrel, occupied an arm-chair that Luckie M'Cowie brought from the parlour for his accommodation.

Sandy had been speaking to a sunburnt, but very well looking peasant girl, who was sitting in the kitchen, on the subject of her lover's addresses. The girl seemed to feel no bashfulness whatever on this delicate point, but

discussed with Sandy the objections to her lover's suit with as much unconcernedness at our presence, as if the topic of debate were merely the purchase of a cap.

"What siller has he got?" inquired the adviser.

"Ow, he's no that muckle to be compleened o' regarding warld's gear."

"I am then to collect from you, lassie, that he's tolerably rich."

"Ow, ay—I dinna say but he is, indeed."

"Are your parents desirous for the match?"

"Daddie *is*, being aye fond of the siller, but minnie disna care."

"Are you, yoursel?"

A deep, crimson blush, the first I had seen the young woman exhibit, which suffused alike neck, face, and forehead, was the only answer to this query.

"Aha, lassie!" chuckled Sandy, "I think I smell a rat." He then whispered in a very low voice to her, what he afterwards told me was

an inquiry "if she didna love some ither joey better."

The damsel gently bowed her head, as if affirmatively.

"I guessed it, by ye, silly tawpie," whispered Sandy.

"Dinna say onything aboot it," implored the young woman.

"Ne'er fear me, Peggie—but has your joey siller?"

"No sae muckle as him that daddie wants me to marry; he's eneugh by honest labour, though," she added proudly.

I heard not one word of all this at the time; but the whispered portion of the dialogue was afterwards detailed to me by Sandy.

The monarch-minstrel then asked us whether we would like a wee touch of his profession, to which welcome query we readily replied in the affirmative.

"The last night ye were here," he whispered me, "I devoted my skeel to Mr. Johnston's be-

hoof; I sall now try my hand at some one else;" and he sang the following stanzas to a slow old Scottish air; mimicking, with characteristic expression and emphasis, the various characters embodied in his ditty.

I.

"O mither dear, what sall I do?
My lovers are a' scared by daddie;
He flytes at a' that come to woo,
—Auld carle, as weel as bonnie laddie.

II.

"'Jock Raploch, quit my daughter's side,
'Her gudesire ye might be, auld shaver!
'Ye're ower auld to seek a bride,
'Aye peghing like a miller's aiver!

III.

"'Think o' your kirkyard hame, auld deil;
'Four bearers sune will bring ye till 't;
'A wedding-bed befits *ye* weel,
'That sune maun streek 'neath daisy-quilt.'

IV.

"'Keep aff, young Patie Gray, frae Jean;
'Ye're unco young to think o' daffin;
'Ye've ither gear to guide, I ween,
'Than setting silly jiglets laughin.'

V.

" ' Hoot! Duncan Airlie, get ye gane,
' I swear my daughter Jean ne'er streeks
' Doon by the side of ony mon,
' Whose kilted hurdies ken nae breeks.

VI.

" ' You, Blethergab, let Jean alane;
' Your "*poortith cauld*" wad likely kill her;
' She can't afford to marry ane
' Wha hasna got a pickle siller.

VII.

" ' Ye light-heel'd loon, ye'd daunce a' day,
' And a' the night till morn again;
' But harkee—Wha the deil 's to pay
' The piper? I suld like to ken.

VIII.

" ' Ae pauper carle that hasna got
' Ae blanket for the bedding o't,
' Nor brose, nor brewis for the pot—
' Ye'd mak a bonny wedding o't.

IX.

" ' John Murdieson, ye're ower grand
' And rich, to marry Jean ava';
' Her sire will ne'er stand cap-in-hand
' Till ony leevin' son-in-law.'

X.

" ' Sae here 's the chat the livelang year;
Ae chield's too rich, too puir 's anither;
Too young, too auld—nae breeks to wear—
O! guide yer ain puir Jeanie, mither '

XI.

"'Whilk o' the carles lo'e ye best?
Speak till yer mither true and fairly.'
'Oh, mither! mither! life were blest,
Amang the hills wi' Duncan Airlie.'

XII.

"'Then do, as I ance did mysel;
Instead o' by the ingle sitting,
Up! o'er the brae, the burn, the fell—
Up! Jeanie! mak a moonlight flitting.'

XIII.

"Ae kiss, ae tear, ae rosy smile,
And Jeanie's left her minnie's ingle;
She's fled wi' Duncan mony a mile,
O'er mountain, glen, and forest-dingle.

XIV.

"She's fled—whare summer moons are glowing,
O'er brooks in sparkling eddies flowing;
Whare summer winds are saftly blowing,
Fresh o'er the bloomin' heather."

"So, after all, she ran off with the Highland sans-culotte?" said I.

"E'en sae, master; and a right gude wife she made him. I ken'd the couple weel; and to please Duncan it was that I made the ballant aboot them."

"What!" said I, "I thought that you never made love songs? I understood that your forte lay quite in the historical line, and that you never condescended to warble an amorous ditty."

"Nor wad I hae dune sae on the present occasion," he observed, in a tone only audible to myself, "an' it were not to gie ye a hint, laddie."

"To give me a hint?" I answered, in the same low tone; "why, old man, you speak enigmas."

"*Do as Duncan Airlie did*," responded Sandy, glancing volumes of intelligence from the corner of his keen, humorous, twinkling eye. "Do as Duncan Airlie did; carry aff your ain Jeanie from them a', and let them care that come ahint—d'ye take me *now*, lad?"

"I have no Jeanie," answered I, with a strange mixture of feelings, in which resentment at Sandy's interference, inclination to take his advice, and amusement at the sly,

humorous manner in which it was conveyed, were curiously jumbled together.

"Ye have na Jeanie, quo' he—mayhap ye have a Flora, then, that wad suit ye just as weel to mak a moonlight flitting wi'. Eh, lad?"

With difficulty I refrained from laughing outright. I was, however, really offended at the liberty the old man took, and I whispered in my best tone of dignity, "Say no more on such a subject, sir; you are impertinent." It immediately struck me, however, that there was no great wisdom in making an enemy of this strange genius, who had evidently got full possession of my secret, however he had managed to acquire the knowledge; and I repented of my brusquerie as soon as it was uttered. But Sandy took not the smallest offence.

"Impertinence!" said he, good humouredly; "may be sae—may be no; howbeit, I'll gie Mr. Johnston an historical ballant o' the Bruce, and by the time it 's ower, ye may hae possibly recovered your gude temper. Say what

you wull, ye canna make me angry wi' ye, lad."

Sandy sang several spirit-stirring ballads of the past, into every one of which he had thrown a tone of sterling patriotism that made the hearts of his auditors leap within their bosoms.

When Mr. Johnston retired to his room, I was left, as on a previous occasion, nearly an hour alone with Sandy, during which period I tried my utmost to induce him to develope the mystery by which he was encircled, but in vain.

"Who, in the name of wonder, *are* you, Sandy; or, are you really what you seem to be?"

"I am your freend; your fast freend," was his answer.

"My friend? and yet advise to an elopement?"

"I wad be responsible for the consequences."

"You! an old country fiddler?" I exclaimed, in astonishment.

"What for no?" returned he, calmly. "Did ye never hear the parable, or fable, of the lion and the mouse? and how,—insignificant, contemptible and sma' as was the mouse,—she was nathless able to cut the toils in whilk the lion was entanglit? I do not mean to say that the apologue is in a' its parteeculars preceesely applicable to huz, for *I* am not a'thegither as minute as was the mouse; nor are ye, my bonnie birkie, quite a lion. But ye're free, nae doubt, to act as you will—only just remember—trust me an ye like, or trust me no,—that suld my aid—But no!" he hastily said, interrupting himself; "I see ye dinna believe me, and I'm nae ither than an auld fule to ware my words upon ye. I see ye don't believe me."

He was right. It was perfectly true that I did not believe him. I did not, however, entertain a single question of his perfect sincerity. I felt persuaded that he deceived himself into the idea that he was possessed of influence with either my father or Dunsneath to a greater extent than really existed. And then I

perplexed my mind with speculations regarding the nature of his real influence, if any. Was he aware of some crime committed by either my father or Flora's, the knowledge of which might enable him to control their actions, under pain of divulging it? I chased away that supposition as being in the highest degree improbable. *My father*, an atrocious, trembling criminal! I *felt* it an impossibility. Well, perhaps Dunsneath might be the culprit. Not very likely either; he was proud, stern, and unforgiving; but further than these traits, his character was irreproachable, and strongly marked with the features of generosity and honour. Add to all this, Sandy had warmly proclaimed himself my friend; in his manner there was the fervent, racy earnestness of truth; and the public disclosure of any iniquity, (supposing such committed, by either my father or Flora's,) must necessarily prove so galling to my feelings, as not to bear any very strong resemblance to an act of friendship.

Mr. Johnston now summoned me to assist

him; and when I had performed my duties of attendance, I retired to bed, but I scarcely slept till dawn, so busily was my mind employed in ruminations upon the minstrel's mysterious pretensions.

Late on the following day we arrived at Holyrood. The king, on the whole, seemed the better for his Highland excursion, and his spirits were improved, so far as I could see.

Flora's eyes were dimmed with tears. Her father's language had been harsh and peremptory, but he had failed in his object of extorting from her a promise to reject my suit. He then threatened to withdraw her from the royal service, which threat the duchess of Angoulême had with difficulty dissuaded him from fulfilling.

CHAPTER XIV.

A MESSENGER APPEARS, ONE OF THE RESULTS OF WHOSE MISSION IS THAT I AM PLACED UNDER SAILING ORDERS.

In a few days, my brother secretary, Maillôt, suddenly entering, announced—

"A messenger from France."

"What is his name?" said the king.

"He refused to inform me, your majesty; he said your majesty would know him when you saw him."

"Not very ceremonious, Malcolm," said the king, in an undertone, "but fallen royalty must not be too scrupulous. Shall we admit him?"

"I certainly think so, sire," I replied; "he may have despatches of importance for your majesty."

"Let him enter," said the king. The French stranger was accordingly admitted: an aged, grey-haired, sun-burnt, hale-looking peasant, in whose rugged countenance the king recognized an old adherent—Paul de Cerf. He threw himself on his knees before the king, and kissed the hand that his majesty extended to him.

"Well, good Paul," said the king, "your journey from Gascony to Holyrood must needs have had some weighty cause."

Paul looked towards me with an air of anxiety and embarrassment.

"Nay," said his majesty, "you may speak anything before this gentleman; he is one of my confidential secretaries."

Paul then produced despatches from one of the Carlist leaders in the South of France, detailing the state of preparation to which their projects had advanced. He had been selected for this weighty mission from the knowledge his principal possessed of his fide-

lity during many years' service in the army at a former period.

When Paul had retired, we perused the despatches, and anxiously debated the projects suggested by their contents. What these were, it is needless to the present narrative to mention.

"What think you, Malcolm," said the king, "of our intelligence?"

"It would be necessary," said I, "that some confidential friend of your majesty's should immediately proceed to France with full instructions."

"Nay," said the king, "all requisite instructions old Paul de Cerf may take on his return."

"Pardon me, sire. The person who goes must, in my humble judgment, not only bear instructions from your majesty, but must also have full power to inspect, and examine, and urge the immediate adoption of your majesty's suggestions and commands. The messenger

must be more than a courier; he must be a confidential and intelligent agent between your majesty and your faithful subjects in the South."

The king dissented from my opinion that an envoy possessed of these powers would be requisite; I still firmly, and urgently pressed my view of the case. * * * * *

* * * * * * *

"Malcolm," said his majesty, "your reasons have convinced me; an intelligent agent *must* go; I am certain the archbishop will think so. But then, there is another difficulty—where shall we find such a person?"

"Sire," said I, "I shall feel but too happy if your majesty will accept my services."

"Alas, my poor Malcolm," said the king, laying his hand upon my shoulder, with great kindness, "why should *you* incur the dangers of that perilous commission? you, who are not one of my natural subjects, whose attachment to my person and cause arose not from a subject's loyalty, but merely from overstrained

gratitude for a few civil words, and a chivalrous spirit of romantic generosity? I could never permit *you* to undertake an office so fraught with danger, when there are Frenchmen both willing and able to perform it. Should you be discovered, your life would most probably be the forfeit; or perhaps you might be doomed to wear out the remainder of your days in the loathsome dungeons of a prison."

"My dear master," I answered, while the tears filled my eyes at his majesty's kind consideration for my safety, "the cause I have espoused I will serve with my life if necessary. I am young, it is true, and sanguine,—but silent, wary, and able, I should hope, to elude the strictest scrutiny of any of the French authorities. When I besought your majesty to permit me to enter your service, I did so in the hope that I might, perhaps, be able, in the course of events, to serve you more effectually than I could by merely reading despatches and writing replies in the palace of Holyrood. Bold, ardent, and ambitious, I thirsted for an

opportunity to prove my devotion to your majesty's cause by encountering danger in your service. And O! how my dreams of fame and glory would be realized, if I ever could effectually aid the restoration of your royal house to the throne of France! Sire, I implore you to entrust me with this service; I shall deem myself amply rewarded by your majesty's success, should my efforts be so fortunate as to render the smallest assistance to your cause.—My royal master, do not refuse me!"

The king spoke not—his head was averted, and his face was covered with his hand. I perceived that he was weeping. His royal heart was full; he turned, and embraced me affectionately.

"Dearest Malcolm," said his majesty, "how can I thank you for your faith and friendship? O that my native subjects could but see the loyal warmth of a stranger in their master's cause! Malcolm, you may go, since you seem to desire it so ardently,—although I fear I am

wrong in giving you this permission. I shall weary heaven with prayers for your safety, although,"—suddenly changing his tone,—"I once more implore you to relinquish the enterprise."

"Sire, my resolve is fixed."

"Yet, Malcolm, I never could forgive myself if aught of evil should befall you.—Conscience would unceasingly tell me it was MY doing, that my folly and irresolution had sacrificed my faithful friend in a cause for whose success, after all, I cannot say that my expectations are very sanguine."

"Sire," said I, "I have got your majesty's permission, and I will keep it. The sooner I set out the better. Your majesty will doubtless assemble a council this evening, and tomorrow I depart."

"Now, heaven forgive me," said the king, looking upwards, "if I sin in permitting this youth to endanger himself in my cause."

"You sin not, sire," I replied, "it is all my doing. You have urgently besought me to

remain at Holyrood, and I told your majesty that my mind was resolved and could not be diverted from its purpose."

When the duke of Angoulême and the archbishop returned from the drive they had that day taken in the environs of Edinburgh, the king assembled a council of his confidential friends. I awaited the decision of the council with no small anxiety, as the king told me that he purposed submitting to their judgment my request to be entrusted with the embassy to France. The council continued in deliberation several hours, during which I remained, by his majesty's command, in the ante-room. I could distinctly hear the voice of the archbishop of Rheims, as the consultation drew to a close, saying,

"Your majesty would err if you did not permit him to go—he is faithful and enthusiastic in your service, and is better for the purpose than any one else you could get."

The king then made some reply, whose import did not reach me; the archbishop re-

joined, in a lower tone than before; the council soon after rose from their discussion; the king ordered my attendance in his private closet.

"Malcolm," said his majesty, "the length of our deliberations has probably wearied you, —nay, man; deny it not! I am tired myself of the business. Our time was chiefly occupied in arranging the nature of the despatches, which D'Autun and Maillôt, your brother secretaries, are now about to write. The only danger to which you are exposed, is that the despatches should be found in your possession. The French police are so sharp there is scarcely a chance of eluding their vigilance. We were debating how you might best contrive to obviate this danger; my lord archbishop would not suggest anything; he said he placed more reliance on your own *savoir faire* than on that of the assembled council. The duke of Augoulême suggested that if you went to Spain, and thence entered France in a Spanish vessel, it would avert much of the

danger of detection to which you would otherwise be exposed. Let me know your opinion of this plan."

"With all deference to his royal highness," said I, "I think that a journey to Spain would occasion great delay, which your majesty is aware it should be our first care, under the circumstances, to avoid. I will sail from Southampton to Havre, and proceed directly to Paris, and as ********* is your majesty's most powerful friend in that city, I shall make a point of delivering his despatches first."

"But once more, Malcolm—suppose that the spies of Louis Philippe should discover the papers in your possession?"

"My dear master, trouble not yourself about that; leave me to guard against that chance."

"How do you mean to conceal them?" asked the king.

"Easily enough, sire, if they are not voluminous. I shall get a new leather cover for my travelling trunk, and lay the papers flat be-

tween the lid of the trunk and the leather, which must then be tacked on with brass nails. With this precaution I defy all the spies of monsieur Louis Philippe. Why, unless they are specially inspired by the devil, they never will dream of hunting for papers in such an unprecedented place. It is a thousand to one that I baffle them. So your majesty may calm your gracious fears on my account. May I ask your majesty at what hour the council have arranged that I am to depart?"

"To-morrow afternoon," replied the king; "and now I must supply you with funds for your journey."

His majesty furnished me with notes to the amount of £300, and recommended me to retire to repose, "unless you would wish first," he added, "to bid adieu to any of the family or household. The duchess d'Angoulême might be offended if you did not bid miss Douglas farewell."

The king said this with a smile. I bowed, and quitting the apartment, proceeded imme-

diately to the parlour which the duchess d'Angoulême chiefly occupied in the evenings. I tapped at the door for admittance, but no answer was returned. The door was partly open, and being rather inclined to imagine from the silence within that the room was unoccupied, I ventured to advance. The embers of a fire still smouldered on the hearth, but the lamps were extinguished. The room was far from dark, however, for the moon had risen within the last half hour, and the wild expanse of the king's park stretched into distance beneath the dim light. The shutters of the window were unclosed, but the curtains were half drawn. I approached the casement to gaze for a moment on the broken and romantic ground beneath, when I beheld a form, that had hitherto been hidden by the half closed curtain, seated in the deep embrasure of the window. It was Flora. A deep sigh, which she vainly endeavoured to suppress, betrayed that she had been weeping. I

took her hand, which she did not withdraw from mine.

"I am come," said I, "to bid you farewell."

"I know it," replied Flora, making a strong effort to conquer her emotion.

"You know it?" echoed I; "why, it is only within the last half hour that the council have determined on sending me to France, and how could *you* have known it?"

"News flies faster than that in the region of a court," replied Flora, with a melancholy smile; "but my information was nothing miraculous; the duke of Angoulême mentioned it to the duchess in my presence, about ten minutes since—not long, I believe, after the council had broken up. The duchess was retiring to bed at the time, and as soon as I was dismissed from attendance, I returned to this room to—to—compose myself, for I wished to be alone for a while. Ah, Malcolm, I fear that your mission is a dangerous one; but since the lot is cast, it is not for

me to shake your confidence or fill your mind with fears. Yet when I think of the search made so recently in Paris for suspected Carlist emissaries"——

"They were bungling fellows to incur suspicion," interrupted I; "I shall remain at the house of *********, while I stay in Paris, and perhaps be presented at the court of Louis Philippe, and not a soul shall ever dream I am a Carlist agent."

"Oh, for heaven's sake, dear Malcolm," exclaimed Flora, in a tone of thrilling earnestness, "do not run any needless risks; I tremble when I think your bold and reckless spirit may lead you to outrun the bounds of prudent caution. Promise me, Malcolm, that you will not."

I promised.

"For the rest," resumed Flora, "I need not urge your very best efforts for our royal benefactors and their cause, and may heaven grant you the good fortune to become their restorer to their rights."

"That 's a flight beyond my hopes," I answered with a smile; "however, I shall do my best, and doubt not I shall help most manfully."

"Do so; and may you return to us safely and speedily. However, I shall desire your return even less, than that you may reap fame and honour in the service of our good old king. Your courage, Malcolm, imparts a corresponding confidence to me; I feel revived, and my spirits are no longer blanked. You must now retire—it is late, and you will have to travel far ere this time to-morrow. Do you travel post?"

"I believe so—the council are resolved to be minute in their commands, and I suspect the duke does not wish to expose my prudence to the temptation of inquisitive political companions on the road"——

"Impossible!" cried Flora; "his royal highness could not be so absurd."

"Explain it as you will, Flora, his majesty informed me I was to travel post, and of course

I made no reply. We can only guess at the motives that prompted this command."

"Well, dear Malcolm, good night; you ought to have been asleep ere this.—Good night—God bless you. Perhaps you may meet Sholto in France; he was suddenly summoned there last week."

"Good night, dearest Flora," said I, clasping the lovely being in my arms. The coy maiden escaped from my embrace and left me alone in the apartment.

The clocks of the palace struck twelve as I reached my dormitory. I soon fell asleep, and arose at an early hour on the morrow to prepare for my journey.

CHAPTER XV.

"Ha! this now is a fellow who looks like a conspirator."
SPANISH FATHER.

My preparations were brief, and when they were made, I went to George Square to bid my father farewell.

"Where are you bound for, Malcolm," demanded the old gentleman.

With true diplomatic caution, I replied, "For England." He did not press me further, but commenced an enthusiastic eulogium on the king, the royal family, and Flora, in whose praise he continued to speak until the hour informed me that it was time to return to the palace. Once more I sought Flora, to bid her another adieu, but she was too busily engaged in attendance on her royal mistress to be vi-

sible. I departed from Holyrood, buoyed with the hope of a successful termination to my mission, and reached Southampton on the third day of my journey. A vessel was just about to sail; I went on board, and arrived, after a remarkably quick passage, at Havre. I underwent the usual inspection from the custom-house officers and police, and feeling much fatigued I retired at once to bed on reaching my hotel. The following morning I breakfasted in the public apartment, which was filled with a number of energetic politicians, all chattering with merciless energy and emphasis, and no one listening.

Being the only silent person in the company, I lent an attentive ear to the speakers who were next me. Perceiving that I did not take any part in the Babel of noise, they unanimously fastened upon me as a listener.

"Apparément, monsieur a beaucoup de jugement," said a tall, swarthy, ill-dressed, military looking person, who instantly followed

up this prefatory compliment by demanding my opinion whether the partisans of the Napoleon dynasty were likely to become numerous enough to afford just grounds of alarm to Louis Philippe?

"Monsieur has doubtless so much judgment, that he *must* think so," eagerly added another disputant, without waiting for my answer. "Monsieur must certainly be aware that the duke of Reichstadt's friends are increasing in number every day, and reckon securely on foreign sympathy and assistance."

"Monsieur has far too much judgment to hold so mistaken an opinion," interrupted the military looking politician, with great eagerness; "he must know that a great number of the duke of Reichstadt's supporters have been won over to the cause of the Carlists."

"That is mere rumour, and never had authentic confirmation," interposed the other disputant.

"Mais, monsieur sçait bien qu'il est vrai,"

rejoined the military personage. "I appeal to monsieur." Here, for the first time, there was a pause.

"I assure you, gentlemen," I replied, "I am a stranger, only just arrived in France, and quite uninformed on the subject respecting which you have done me the honour to ask my opinion."

"O, pardonnez moi, monsieur," said the soldierly personage, who, àpropos, had much the look of a bully appertaining to a minor description of gambling house; "pardonnez moi, monsieur—cela est parfaitement impossible—tout le monde en sçait quelque chose."

"Certainement, certainement," echoed the other disputant; "tout le monde en sçait quelque chose—mais, apparément, monsieur est Anglois."

I bowed to this suggestion, thereby wishing to intimate to my catechists that as I was ignorant of, and took no interest in the subject of their debate, I did not wish to be questioned concerning it. They seemed to resent my in-

difference to the rights of young Napoleon and the Carlists, and were silent for some moments, apparently digesting their ill-humour; the military gentleman eyed me with a most portentous scowl, when the crowd of politicians and talkers behind us began to make way for a lady who entered the coffee-room.

"Place à madame! place à madame!" was echoed from one to another, and a soft, affected voice immediately behind me, exclaimed, ere I was aware of her approach—

"Mr. Malcolm Hay!"—I turned, and beheld to my utter astonishment, my old fellow traveller, and Flora's tormenting chaperone, lady Dalton! now the wife of an Italian duca. I should have indeed been astonished at seeing any other lady forcing her way unescorted through a coffee-room; but lady Dalton always piqued herself on belonging to that spirited class of dames who say and do any thing or every thing, in total recklessness of consequences. I had scarcely risen to salute her ladyship, when she threw herself into one

of her favourite attitudes, exclaiming, "Well, dearest Malcolm! and how are you? and how is your venerable and antique papa? and how goes on the feudal quarrel with Dunsneath? and, O! above all, how is my angelic little Flora? I have ten thousand questions to ask you, Mr. Hay. And, ah! I must not forget to inquire—have you seen our poor dear old friend, Charles Dix, since his arrival in Edinburgh? Nay, I anticipate your answer, my good Malcolm—I am sure you need not tell me—I know you too well to suppose you would neglect to pay your dutiful respects to his majesty. Dear old man! I was so shocked when those odious republicans expelled him from his home! I am sure you have spent almost the whole of your time with his majesty at Holyrood. Ah, monsieur Malcolm—*un petit oiseau* told me the whole story—you see I know all about your movements—you positively think I am inspired! But, you poor unlucky being, I might easily know you would become an assiduous visitor at Holyrood when

the duchess of Angoulême arrived there, bringing in her train so bright a prize as my empyrean little Flora. I was with her in Paris when she entered the duchess's service; I surrendered her certainly with *some* little reluctance, although I felt pleasure at seeing her so advantageously situated. The polish of a court, you know, was all she wanted. I am certain she is an exquisite creature now. She always had infinite grace, but did not possess quite dignity enough for my taste. I am particularly fastidious about dignity; I think even fashion *ne vaut rien* without it. I made it a point to inculcate the necessity of a dignified air as long as Flora was with me, and repeatedly urged her to form herself on *my* model, but the giddy, thoughtless creature never minded me. She always wanted steadiness. I begged of the duchess of Angoulême to attend to the expansion of Flora's intellectual powers. Alas! in *this* respect, poor Flora will never find any instructress competent to supply *my* place. The *mind*, the *mind* it is that con-

fers real dignity. I wished to inspire Flora with philosophical ambition; I would have taught her to grapple with the consecrated follies of dogmatical prejudice, and to steer her bold and dexterous course through the labyrinthine mazes of erroneous, though popular, principles. But you are positively a most provoking creature; you have not yet told me one word about yourself, or your prospects, or what has brought you to France, where all the world is *distrait* about Louis Philippe, and the Carlists and Napoleonites. Which of them are *you* for? of course you are a Carlist—and àpropos of Carlists, how does our poor dear old friend bear his exile at Holyrood? I assure you I am now on my return to Scotland as much for the purpose of seeing him and all those poor dear Bourbons, as any thing else. Pray let us adjourn to a private apartment—for I have fifty thousand things to say that one never could say in a public room like this. I saw your name on a trunk in the lobby, as I passed, and I flew to you at once. I

have been staying these three days at this hotel, unwilling to embark; the water always makes me exceedingly nervous. Flora, I remember, had great nerve; she would face any undertaking without being in the least discomposed. I thought it an unfeminine trait—but to own the truth, the angelic girl has no more *finesse de sentiment* than a hippopotamus."

For the first time since this voluble lady commenced her harangue, there was a pause, which I took immediate advantage of by assenting to her proposal of adjournment, and making some inquiries respecting her exalted consort.

"Oh, the monster!" she quickly replied, "do not ask me about him! I assure you his name is nearly enough to bring on an accés of hysterics! For the last five months I have been obliged to sleep with a stiletto under my pillow every night—my safety required the precaution, I assure you. At last I got tired of the trouble, so I took French leave of Il Illustrissimo. You look quite astonished, and

no wonder. The man is an assassin, I am perfectly convinced. I never should have formed such an ill-starred connexion had I been guided by our amiable friend the duchess of Berri. She warned me against him, but alas, in vain. I shall have *des longues details* about him to astonish her royal highness when I go to Holyrood."

All this time we were slowly moving out of the room, and when we reached the door I saw various glances fixed upon us, while the whispered murmurs "Carliste! Carliste!" were repeated from mouth to mouth. Aware of the perilous predicament in which her ladyship's voluble nonsense had involved me, I felt it necessary to summon to my aid all my presence of mind. As I quitted the room I chanced to recognize among the crowd, M. Pierre Du Bois, an ancient Pyrennean friend, who, from being an attached partisan of the elder branch of Bourbons, had become an abettor of Louis Philippe, in consequence of

some slight which he fancied had been shown him by Charles the Tenth.

Impelled, I presume, by his natural love of mischief, this gentleman was evidently one of the busiest of the whisperers, while his glances appeared to betray the delight he experienced at the prospect of involving in danger and perplexity a supposed friend to the exiled monarch.

Notwithstanding the pain and apprehension occasioned by this unpleasant recognition, I was still obliged to attend to the merciless babble of lady Dalton, (or, as I should now call her, the duchess of F****.) She was joined in the hall by a French lady, who seemed to have awaited her return from the coffee room.

"The duca meditates a visit to Scotland, Malcolm; but remember, if you should see him, you must on no account mention having met me at Havre. Mind—I make quite a point of this—you promise me, Malcolm?

Your mentioning the circumstance might be productive of the most disastrous consequences. You know quite too much of the world, I hope, to be imprudently communicative. My poor unrivalled Dalton always made it a rule never to tell any one that he had seen, met, or heard of any creature of that person's acquaintance, lest imprudent information might be thereby conveyed. He was an excessively prudent man, Malcolm. I often regret him greatly, and contrast him with the duca. Lord Dalton had an infinite fund of good nature, and was wonderfully prudent, but the duca has got such miraculous eyebrows! Volumes of mystery and murder lurk beneath their sable arches! The man is a study—you never can fathom him. I never saw any one so gloomy and mysterious. But altogether I think I liked lord Dalton much better, and so I often tell the duca. It gives one a vast insight into human nature to be married twice—it enlarges and exalts

one's philosophy—it increases one's knowledge of the mystic workings of the human heart." The duchess sighed as she spoke.

"Ah, sans doute, sans doute!" said the French lady, "j'aime fortement la philosophie conjugale—I had tree husband. De first vas Frenchman—ver goot man indeed! De second vas Italian—I liked him passablement bien—De tird vas Scotchman—ah! he vas de devil! he vould not permit no bal, nor no soirées, nor no thêatre, nor no opera. Ah, madame! he did love de *argent* too well for dat; for he tell me I vould put him in de jail as I did my oder two husband. 'Monstre affreux!' I cry in one grande passion, 'and should not you be too happy for being in jail for my sake?' And vat you tink, miladi duchesse? De vilain man tell me up to my face he vould not!!! Quel impertinence! I regard him furieusement! 'Coquin! scelerât!' I exclaim, 'je vous deteste!' So he go off to Ecosse, and I go off to

Italie, and I didn't never hear of him no more at all never since."

The duchess of F****'s slow progress up stairs had now brought us to the door of a private salon, when my shoulder was tapped from behind—I turned, and beheld young Douglas of Dunsneath—Flora's brother.

He drew me aside. "Your retreat is intercepted," said he in a hurried whisper; "that chattering idiot attracted universal observation towards you; as soon as you quitted the room an old man named Du Bois declared he knew you were a Carlist, and he immediately went off to the Prefêt to lodge an accusation. The Prefêt I know has left town, and will not return for an hour; but police are stationed at the doors of this house, so you cannot escape. Have you really got any Carlist despatches?"

"I defy them to find them," I replied.

"Very well," pursued Douglas, "I have but one word to say; you will of course be examined, but do not deny that you *were* in the

service of Charles the Tenth. Say that you were discharged from his service last month. Mark that. Await me in their parlour; I return in half an hour."

So saying, my unexpected ally disappeared, and I entered the apartment with the duchess of F * * * * and her French friend. Her incessant babillage tingled my ear like the pricking of small needles on a naked nerve. I deemed it but prudent to observe the advice of young Douglas; for reason represented that any abortive attempt to escape would only strengthen suspicion. When the half hour was expired, Douglas entered the room where I still sat with the duchess and her friend; he requested to speak a few words with me in another apartment. I accordingly led the way to my dormitory.

"Here are two letters," said he, "which will serve to exculpate you; make haste—put them into your trunk—it is of great importance that they should be found there. If they bring

you off triumphantly I shall give myself great credit for my ingenuity."

"Why, Douglas," said I, quite astonished, "of what nature are these letters?"

"Put them in your trunk this very instant, and then I will tell you—you have not a moment to lose—the police may come in every minute and seize on your luggage."

I immediately complied, and when I had locked my trunk,

"Now," said Douglas, "I will tell you what these letters are; one of them purports to be a letter from Flora to you, as if in answer to a previous application of yours for her interest with the duchess of Angoulême in procuring your forgiveness from Charles the Tenth, from whose service you must say you have been dismissed in disgrace. The other epistle purports to be no less than an autograph letter of the duchess to Flora, regretting that the prejudices of the king against you are so firmly rooted that she must wholly decline attempting

to procure your restoration to his majesty's favour. This is, perhaps, the most exquisite imitation of the duchess's writing that human ingenuity could produce; and I have, moreover, the good fortune to possess an envelope directed by the duchess to Flora, in which I enclosed it. Now these letters will appear a strong proof that you have been discarded with indignity from the household of Charles the Tenth; and, moreover, that all efforts have failed to negociate your reinstatement in his majesty's service. No rational being can think that a disgraced, discarded servant,—one, moreover, who has wholly forfeited his master's confidence, could possibly be entrusted with despatches from that master. If they ask you were you really unfaithful to his majesty, you may say you were *not;* it will look candid, and therefore will the better avail to baffle suspicion. And now return to that garrulous idiot —Hark! I verily believe the police are on the stairs!"

I pressed his hand and returned to the duchess, who was engaged in a spirited altercation with her companion about some new style of dress which had lately appeared in the world of fashion.

CHAPTER XVI.

"And then the justice."

SHAKSPEARE.

I HAD hardly been seated five minutes when two of the police ascended the stairs and entered the apartment.

"Monsieur Hay!" was the pleasing summons from the lips of the burly looking fellow who appeared to take the lead. "You must please to accompany us before the prefêt, monsieur," continued the man, as I rose and advanced towards him.

"Grand ciel!" exclaimed the duchess, flinging herself on the sofa in a tolerably accurate attitude of horror and surprise.

"Madame la duchesse de F****!" pronounced the officer in a tone appallingly official. The duchess screamed, and exhibited gestures of all lengths and breadths upon the sofa, imploring madame de Maillard Fraser (her French friend) to furnish her with all sorts of restoratives.

"The prefêt cannot wait, madame," said the officer, "and your ladyship may bring your *esprits odorants* with you."

"Good heavens! with what crime am I charged?" exclaimed the lady.

"With none, madame. You are only cited to appear as a witness. You will learn in what cause from the prefêt."

With somewhat less reluctance than her hysterical commencement seemed to promise, the duchess accompanied the police to the street door, where a carriage was in waiting; we were made to enter, and were speedily driven to the court of justice where the prefêt was seated in judicial dignity. From certain reasons of policy, the examination was strictly

private. Strangers were excluded, and the charge which was preferred against me, imported that good reason existed for believing that I was a Carlist spy, or emissary, in the service of Charles the Tenth. In support of this charge, the duchess of F* * * * was examined by the prefêt, with reference to the allusions she had publicly made in the coffee room of my being an abettor of that monarch.

"Have you been long acquainted with monsieur Hay, madame?"

"Yes—for many years."

"Are you aware that he holds a situation in the service of the late king of France?"

"I do not know."

"But did you not, madame, while conversing with him in the coffee room of the Hotel d'Angleterre, allude to his being at Holyrood as 'being at his post.'"

"Indeed I did, monsieur le Prefêt—and I should scarcely suspect him of deserting that post."

"Then it seems that he *does* hold some post there?"

"I strongly suspect that he does."

"Is it in the service of Charles the Tenth?"

"Nay, monsieur le Prefêt, I did not say that."

"In the service of the duchess of Berri, then?"

"Nay, monsieur, I did not say that neither."

"Diantre! madame! don't trifle with me—In whose service did monsieur Hay hold this post?"

"Monsieur le Prefêt," said the duchess, "will confer a particular favour if he does not press me for a reply to that query. It is one which involves our dearest sympathies."

"Diable!" screamed the Prefêt, "I insist on a direct answer—I will not be trifled with! In whose service do you think M. Hay held this post?"

"In the service of Love," replied the Illustrissima, looking modestly down. The Prefêt

foamed with rage, but his wrath was repressed by a magisterial looking person who sat at his elbow, and who said, "Let madame explain herself."

"My meaning then is," said the duchess, "since you press to know that which delicacy should forbid you inquiring into, that I knew an attachment of an ardent and delicate nature had existed for years between the prisoner and a lady who is now in the service of the duchess of Angoulême at Holyrood, where I judged he constantly visited this lady. I hope this examination may not transpire, or the gentle girl would never forgive me for proclaiming her secret to M. le Prefêt."

"Her secret is safe in my keeping," said the prefêt with laudable gravity. He had now quite recovered his temper, probably perceiving that nothing was to be got by an exhibition of violence. "You spoke, madame," continued he, "of some connexion or acquaintance between M. Hay and Charles the Tenth. Pray be so kind to inform us of

what nature is that connexion, since you deny that Monsieur Hay is in his majesty's service?"

"I really know no more than I have already told you," replied the duchess; "and I think you might have treated me with more respect than to summon me here to answer such questions. I am, I should think, entitled to some deference."

"The forms of law must plead my excuse with your highness," answered the prefêt; "I regret they should have disturbed your serenity. Bring forward the prisoner. Pray, sir, are you in the service of Charles the Tenth?"

"No."

"But you *have been* in his service?"

This query was prompted by Du Bois.

"Yes," I replied, "I have been."

A strong sensation was evidently produced by this admission.

"And how long since you quitted his service?"

"Last month."

"What was the cause of your dismissal?"

"I never distinctly knew; I believe my enemies had persuaded his majesty that I was unfaithful to his service, and I was dismissed without being permitted to justify myself."

"And so you are perfectly innocent of any breach of trust to his majesty?"

"Perfectly innocent; I am totally unconscious of having in any way deserved my disgrace."

"What situation did you hold in the household?"

"That of Gentleman Usher." I did not say *Secretary*, as I should then have been desired to disclose the confidential communications of which that officer must be possessed.

"M. Hay," said the Prefêt, "you must submit to be searched."

"Willingly, monsieur," I replied.

"Our search must extend to your luggage."

I bowed acquiescence, being certain that the concealment I had chosen for the despatches would escape the most rigorous scrutiny.

Looking up, I encountered the eyes of Du Bois, who was gazing on me with an expression of malice, for which I was unable to account. The duchess withdrew, having first informed me, that if I should have the good fortune to escape the guillotine, she would be most happy to have the pleasure of my escort on a shopping expedition. I believe I commanded my temper so far as to give the heartless idiot a civil answer.

I now observed that my luggage had been brought into the office, and I forthwith yielded up my keys. In one of my trunks they found the letters written by Douglas to aid my exculpation. That which bore Flora's signature was audibly read by the Prefêt, who possessed some knowledge of English. It ran thus:—

"DEAR MALCOLM,

"Immediately on receiving your note, I addressed to the duchess of Angoulême a supplicating letter, in which I earnestly

implored her to procure you a hearing from the king; but you will perceive from her reply, which I enclose, that she declined interfering any further, from her conviction that no efforts could avail to remove from his majesty's mind the prejudices he has adopted against you. Dear, dear Malcolm! need I tell you how truly I sympathise in the sorrow you must feel at this most unmerited indignity? The duchess of Angoulême has promised to try if she can prevent the news of your disgrace from reaching your father. Poor old man! it would grieve him sadly. She *hopes* you are innocent; but is also of opinion it were worse than useless to make any application to his majesty at present.

"Adieu—her royal highness has this instant sent for me,

"Your ever faithful

"FLORA."

Holyrood, Thursday.

The Prefêt next perused the letter which purported to have been written to Flora by the duchess of Angoulême. It was in French, and announced to miss Douglas the king's determination, and that even if her influence could avail to induce him to change it, she would hardly feel justified in using any efforts for that purpose, as his majesty had solemnly assured her that the proofs of Mr. Hay's offences were irrefragable. The epistle was signed "Marie Caroline."

These letters passed current with the honest Prefêt, who, as a zealous revolutionist, rejoiced in the evidence they afforded of the fickle and ungrateful disposition of "le vieux tyran Charles Dix," who had spurned from his service an honest, faithful friend, without so much as permitting him to be heard in his defence, or even alleging any cause for this abrupt dismissal.

"Only think," exclaimed the Prefêt, in the full ebullition of his loyal revolutionary zeal,

"only think if that old monster still swayed the destinies of France."

A groan of constitutional horror from the little auditory attested their deep-felt abhorrence of such a calamity.

"I discharge the prisoner," said the Prefêt; "it is wholly impossible he could be a Carlist spy or agent, since he has been so lately turned with insult and disgrace from their service. They never would entrust him with any commission, while the recent indignity still rankles in his mind. The thing is impossible. And the duchess of F**** seems a mad woman—one can place no reliance on her *babillage*. Monsieur Hay, you would find Louis Philippe a much better master than Charles. If ever you re-enter the service of royalty, I advise you to engage with him."

"I shall take your advice, monsieur le Prefêt, whenever I renew my acquaintance with kings, but I have got quite enough of royalty for one while."

"I verily believe you!" cried the Prefêt. "Messieurs," turning to a pair of official looking persons, "the prisoner is acquitted."

"Now what would you think," said Du Bois to the Prefêt, "if these letters of the duchess of Angoulême and mademoiselle Flora Douglas were a sham?"

"Think!" repeated the worthy Prefêt, most contemptuously, "I think it impossible—that's all. Ciel! mon ami! I understand these things too well to be imposed on—I have filled the office of Prefêt too long to be easily duped. Knaves of all kinds have been playing off their tricks in my presence these many years past, and I think I should have some small experience in chicane. My good friend, Du Bois, your *soupçon* is utterly preposterous. That raw Scotch youth is incapable of conceiving such a piece of accomplished deception, far less of carrying it into execution with any degree of success."

As soon as my acquittal was pronounced, I

left the presence of the Prefêt, and returned to my hotel. The diligence in which I had engaged my seat for Paris was just about to start —I entered it, and was soon far beyond the precincts of the town.

CHAPTER XVII.

"Commend me, Inez, to the mystery of kinghood."
KING OR NO KING.

ARRIVED in Paris, I proceeded immediately to the residence of a Carlist agent, who, àpropôs, had just returned from a levée of Louis Philippe's. I was instantly admitted, and informed him that I was the bearer of despatches from his exiled master, and begged to know at what hour it would be his convenience to receive them. He appointed eleven the following day, and moreover proposed to take charge of the commands with which I was intrusted for count * * * * *. As this was not quite in accordance with the instructions I had received at Holyrood, I

declined the offer, and was about to proceed to the South, to place in the hands of the count the despatches addressed to him, when his arrival in Paris was unexpectedly announced, just in time to spare me the trouble of a long and fruitless journey.

The count invited me to dinner for the following day, and told me I might expect to meet a large number of Carlists, who were to assemble in a sort of conclave for the purpose of discussing the concerns of their party. The next morning was the Sabbath, and I begged of my host's eldest son, a young man not more than two or three and twenty, to direct me to the nearest place of worship. He stared, with some appearance of astonishment, and asked me to repeat my request, as he had not distinctly heard me.

"I will thank you," said I, "to direct me to the nearest church; I am quite a stranger in Paris."

With rather less than French politeness, he burst out laughing in my face. When his

sudden fit of merriment had in some degree subsided,

"Do not," said he, "ask any one to show you the way to a place of worship, or you will infallibly be taken for a Carlist."

"What?" exclaimed I, "and have the revolutionists quite upset religion?"

"Mon trés bon monsieur," he replied, "il n'y a rien de tel dans Paris, depuis le detrônement du vieux tyran Charles Dix. La religion etait une de ses marottes, pauvre homme! mais quant à nous, nous sommes tous philosophes."

"Voici la belle philosophie," thought I; and perceiving there was not any chance of procuring the young gentleman's assistance as a guide, I strolled out to find my way to a church as well as I could.

In one of the streets through which I passed, a great crowd had collected, in the centre of which some carriages had become entangled. The street was extremely narrow,

so that standing close to the houses, I had a very near view of an open carriage with the royal arms, whose occupants, as I quickly discovered, were Louis Philippe and his Queen.

A miserable, ragged, squalid group of chiffoniers surrounded the vehicle, and were busily asserting an equality of citizenship with his majesty.

"Ah, Louis Philippe, mon ami!" said a man with a rag-basket, "comment vous portez vous, Louis Philippe?"

The Citizen-King, who happened at that moment to be engaged in a courteous acknowledgment of similar claims of *egalité* at the opposite side of his carriage, did not hear this address; on which the sans-culotte appellant thought proper to insist in a still more authoritative tone on his right to attention.

"Louis Philippe; Ecoutez moi, Louis Philippe, je vous dis! Comment vous va ce matin, maitre Louis Philippe?"

Louis, intent on the acquisition of "golden opinions," replied in a tone as bland as though he felt honoured by the query.

"Ah! que c'est trés bien donc!" returned the catechist; "vous savez bien, maitre Louis Philippe, que vous n'êtes qu' un citoyen, tout comme nous."

"Certainement, mon ami, certainement," said the Citizen King with a saccharine smile *.

"Et que *nous* sommes LE PEUPLE SOUVERAIN!" added the ragged man.

"Certainement, certainement," responded the wily and astucious Louis, obsequiously bowing, bowing, bowing, to the obstreperous majesty of the surrounding crowds, and waving his hat in obedience to the cheers for "Le Peuple Souverain," for which the revolutionist multitude had called.

* This will at once appear to have been written at the period when Louis Philippe found every possible extravagance of condescension requisite to establish himself on his throne. He is *now* (1837) tolerably absolute.

"Now," cried one of the chiffoniers, "we will cheer for the king."

Cries of "Vive Louis Philippe!" "Vive le Roi-Citoyen!" were instantly echoed through the crowd. "Vive la Reine Citoyenne!" was next heard, to which, as before, the populace loudly responded.

There was then a cry for *largesse*, but the carriages were now disentangled, and that of Le Roi Citoyen drove rapidly off, its occupant evidently glad to escape from the troublesome contact with his unwashed subjects, and exclaiming with touching humility that he was only *le serviteur le plus obeïssant* of the Great French People. The Great French People could not well demand largesse from their servant, so the claim was drowned in the volley of cheers and acclamations among which the illustrious *concitoyen* was whirled away.

I proceeded on my way to church, where I was gratified to find the attendance much better than the philosophic son of mine host

had led me to expect; and the service was performed without any disgraceful interruption. After service I walked in the Champs Elysées until dinner hour approached.

At the house of count * * * * * I met several persons of Carlist principles, who were chiefly gentlemen of rank and fortune in the province of Brittany.

As soon as I was furnished with answers to the despatches, I proceeded on my route to Holyrood with all possible speed. I embarked at Calais to avoid all possible mischance from revival of suspicion at Havre, and travelled with such speed that I arrived at Edinburgh in three weeks from the day on which I left it.

CHAPTER XVIII.

> "With dagger's haft at the wicket strong,
> He knocked full loud and knocked full long.
> The porter hurried to the gate,
> Who knocks so loud and knocks so late?"
>
> SIR WALTER SCOTT.

I HAD sailed from London home; it was night when the vessel reached Leith; when I got on shore, one of the first persons I recognized was Flora's brother Sholto. He had himself only arrived a day or two previously, having been unexpectedly referred, on reaching Paris, to a merchant residing in London; who, in turn, had sent him back with letters to a correspondent in Auld Reekie, in whose archives poor Sholto was to rummage for documents connected with the unattainable legacy. He was agreeably surprised at seeing me; he had come to the vessel to meet a friend whose arrival he expected.

"But I am much better pleased to see *you*," said he; "I have much to say to you, and as the royal family are not at present in Edinburgh you may stop and sleep *chez moi* to-night."

"The royal family not in Edinburgh?" said I, "where have they gone?"

"On a short tour to the Highlands," answered Douglas; "their departure is not generally known in town; they will return to Holyrood in a day or two."

"In that case I cannot do better than accept your invitation—but stay—is your father *chez vous?* for you know the exquisite hereditary feud."

"O, curse the feud," cried Sholto, laughing, "but your dignity is safe, for I do not invite you to any abode of my father's; I am now on a visit at the ancient and baronial 'lodging'* of my maternal uncle Garloch in the Canongate, and at his house any friend of the

* The Scottish term 'Lodging' as applied to a town residence conveys a very different idea from the English word. The antiquated palaces of the nobility in the old town of Edinburgh were termed 'Lodgings.'

king will always have a warm welcome, provided the porter admits us—but the porter is often less gracious than his master; especially when the hour is so late that the admittance of a visitor would disturb his repose. But at any rate it is only a trial of skill with him, and if he turns us out, why I'll share the hospitality of your apartment at Holyrood."

While this conversation passed, we were rapidly whirled along the noble road from Leith to Edinburgh in Sholto's carriage, and ere many minutes passed, we found ourselves at the gate of Garloch's lodging in the Canongate.

The footman knocked at the gate, but no answer was returned. He continued to knock, until I began to fear that Sholto's description of the porter's inhospitable character was too correct.

"I see I must get out myself," said he; "the old rascal is one of the greatest oddities in Scotland, but when he hears my voice he may be somewhat mollified. Bernard!" continued Sholto *hautement*, "Bernard!" But the old porter answered not.

I jumped out of the carriage after Sholto, and knocked at the gate with the butt-end of a pistol.

"I am resolved we will spoil his repose," said I; "we'll have that satisfaction at all events."

And Sholto, myself, and the footman began to knock simultaneously, until our clatter might well have awakened the dead.

"He hears us quite distinctly," said Sholto, "but he's as obstinate as a mule, and he thinks his master will always bear him out. But he shall gain nothing by it, for I would rather stand here till morning than humour him. He presumes on Garloch's partiality, as he once saved his life at great personal peril."

The little lodge which Bernard occupied was close to the gate, and the family mansion, or 'lodging,' was situated at the opposite side of a small quadrangle, laid out in trimly kept grassplots. The other sides of the quadrangle were occupied by offices, to which access was had from the adjoining lanes.

We continued to knock and to vociferate,

until Bernard gruffly responded from within by inquiring who knocked at such an unseasonable hour.

"It is I," replied Sholto, "let me in, good Bernard."

"If young gentlemen dinna keep proper hours," said the cynical Bernard, "they can't expect that orderly, decent servants, in quiet, sober families, are to donce after a' their vagaries. Maister Sholto, ye ken fu' weel I canna' let ye in—ye ken that his honour gied me strict commands on nae account to open the gate to ony chield alive after twalve o'clock at night, and I daurna disobey him or he'd turn me out o' my place."

And we heard his retreating steps within the gate, as if returning to the impregnable citadel of his dormitory.

"Nay, this will never do," said I, despairingly.

"Pooh, don't mind him," said Sholto; "since the fellow has *parleyed*, I warrant you I'll manage him. Bernard! Bernard!"

A grunt from the retreating cynic was the only answer vouchsafed.

"Bernard, I will give you a guinea if you let us in."

"Don't think of it!" whispered I.

"Laissez moi faire," replied Sholto. "What say you to that, honest Bernard?"

"A guinea? will ye sae? And in troth ye ought—ony puir auld deil of a porter like me, that's up early and doon late suld be weel considered for ony extra pains. Weel, and whar's the guinea, mon?"

"Why, how can I put it through a four-foot wall, or an iron-clenched gate, you old fool? Let us in and you shall have it."

"Under favour," responded the wary Bernard; "that will I no! auld fule as I am, I'm no sae saft an auld fule as that. I winna trust ye, maister Sholto, for I ken your skits too weel. Pit the guinea in through the keyhole, mon! and then I'll let ye in."

"Why, then *I* should have to trust *you*, master Bernard.—Pray, how do I know if you

once got the guinea that you would let me in at all?"

"Weel, then, bide in the street a' night if it like ye,—that 's a'."

And Bernard trudged back to his domicile, his heavy shoes clattering on the little flagged passage.

"Come back, Bernard!" cried Douglas, "I was only jesting, man! to be sure I'll trust you, Bernard! I will put the guinea in through the keyhole. Now, when the gate is opened," whispered he, "enter instantly; and James and Randal," to the footman and postillion, "drive away at once."

Sholto's orders were immediately obeyed; and he and I remained standing alone before the gate. He pushed the guinea through the keyhole, the gate was unbarred, we entered instantly, when he suddenly exclaimed, "Bernard, my good fellow, pick up my handkerchief which has fallen on the pavement there."

Bernard, who seemed much mollified by the guinea, immediately stepped forth to find

Sholto's imaginary handkerchief, and the instant he was outside the gate, Sholto shut it and locked it. It was now Bernard's turn to petition for admittance.

"Heaven bless your honour, maister Sholto, let me in. There's a gude young gentleman, now—you've had your joke, sir, and the night 's unco cauld—unlock the wicket, maister Sholto —do now, sir, and heaven bless ye."

"Good night, Bernard—good night, my old fellow," said Douglas, gaily tripping towards the house.

"Hech, sirs! wae 's me! wae 's me!" ejaculated Bernard, "was ever any deil in sic a taking? If Garloch's honour suld find out a' aboot it, guinea and a'."—Here the soliloquist paused, as if considering how far his master's customary favour might extend to his present escapade. The reflection did not seem to be quite satisfactory, for he raised his voice once more in accents of entreaty.

"Gudeness' sake, maister Sholto, let us in—the joke 's a' ower now, gude sir, and let us in

—I'm perished wi' the cauld without my coat —an ever ye had pity on a puir auld feckless deevil, let me in for gudeness' sake."

"Why, Bernard, I would with readiness," answered Sholto, "only that my uncle has given strict orders that the gate shall never be opened after twelve at night, and if old fellows like you can't keep proper hours, you cannot expect that the orderly sobriety of a regular family like this should be disturbed on your account."

"Ye're unco pleasant, sir—unco pleasant! ha! ha! ha! if the night wasna quite sae cauld —pray dinna be ill natured, maister Sholto, to a puir auld mon."

"Tut, you fool! If I am to officiate as porter to such an old reprobate, I am sure that I ought to be well paid for it. A guinea now, is the least I may get for admitting you at this unseasonable hour."

"Ye're pleasant, maister Sholto, unco pleasant—open the gate, maister Sholto, and we'll settle a' aboot that."

"My honest fellow, I don't mean to trust you, I can promise you. If you wish to stay all night in the street, and that my uncle should know you extracted a guinea from me as you have done, well and good—if not, put the guinea through the keyhole, and learn to be honest and obliging for the future."

There was no help for it; Bernard, with many an inward curse, was obliged to refund the guinea in the manner prescribed, and was then admitted. He slunk surly and grumbling to his dormitory, and Sholto and I proceeded to the house, where we found, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, the duchess of F * * * * and monsieur D'Autun (my brother secretary) in the saloon; madame de Maillard Fraser was also there.

The duchess extended her hand, saying,

"I assure you, dear Malcolm, I felt quite delighted that those horrible republicans neither hanged you nor broke you on the wheel, in consequence of that awkward contretemps at

Havre—such things have often happened, and it would have been dreadfully unpleasant to me, as I was in some respect mixed up with the transaction. The instant you left Havre, I summoned courage enough for my voyage, though I cordially detest the sea, but madame's company was a great inducement. Would you believe it? I have been very coldly received by these Bourbons at Holyrood—in fact, my reception was such that I—I—I resolved I would not visit them again—they really do not deserve that I should—one must punish them in some way for their coldness—I told the archbishop of Rheims that, as their manners seemed so very repulsive, I was delighted that Louis Philippe was king of France; and his eminence looked eminently foolish, I assure you."

"Vat has caused dis froideur, I moche vonder?" said madame de Maillard Fraser.

"Some misrepresentation, I believe, of our demêlé with the jackalls of Louis Philippe at

Havre—the duchess of Berri said that I was imprudent — *I* imprudent! only conceive! What strange liberties people will take!"

"It will be too bad," said Douglas, laughing, "if, after one demêlé with the new Bourbons in France, you should have another with the old Bourbons in Scotland. The only private individual, who, as far as I know, was honoured with a personal strife with that royal race, was old Gardelle, the opera dancer. In the ballet of Euphrosyne he was dressed in the character of Damon, when the person who was to have represented Lyceste became suddenly ill. The duke of Angoulême sent his commands to Gardelle to perform Lyceste, and surrender the character of Damon to some subordinate actor. But Gardelle refused with an air of much dignity, saying that he felt the honour of his name identified with the representation of Damon; 'and tell his royal highness,' he proudly added, to the messenger, 'that this is not the first *demêlé* MY FAMILY have had with the Bourbons.'"

"Not bad, really, from an opera dancer," said I.

"Ah! je m'en souviens parfaitement! I ave memory of dat little fracas," said madame Fraser, "I vas in the thêatre, and I did see le vieux Gardelle,—poor old man! he vas all dressed in rubans and roses, and his neck vas strip low down like a lady's, and his old *peau ridée*—vat you call his shrivell, wrinkell skin, did look so queer, so drôle, vid all de wreaths of roses. Ah, que c'etait bien drôle! and his littel wrinkell old *visage*, vid une grande perruque noire—hi! hi! hi! I remember all dose ting ver well.—And den to see him danse! skeep! vid all de *agilité* d'un jeune homme. Pauvre Gardelle! he vas de ver grand artiste, sans doute."

"His daughter, Télèthuse, was a beautiful creature," said D'Autun.

"Ah, yes," said the duchess, "and her powers in the ballet were unrivalled. The marquis d'Argenson admired her much."

"And loved her, tendrement," added madame

Fraser. " She accompanie him to his chateâu at Ormée, in Touraine, and she continue his *plus favorisée* jusqu' à la mort! Poor ting! De marquis did doat upon her. He vas moche of de philosophe; he vas chymiste, vid every ting else, and he show his regard for her in a manner elegant and *frappant*. He burn her body to ashes in a case of asbestos, (c'est à dire d'amaranthe,) and he make a small quantity of glass from de ashes, which he did subject to de action of a strong chaleur. Of dis glass he make two rings, one of which he did always wore on each hand. So la belle Télèthuse vas preserve by being vitrify. Idée superbe et nouvelle que celle ci! and her lover always carry her body about on his fingers in a form as transparent as her charms. See vat it is to be un peu philosophe! Now, an ordinary soul vould not never have tought of paying a compliment so elegant as dis to de memory of his *chere amie*."

" I saw one of the rings made of the ashes of poor Télèthuse," said Sholto, " in a museum

collected by the late M. de la Borde, chamberlain to Louis the Sixteenth."

"It was the strangest mode of evincing love," said I, "that I ever heard of."

"Ah!" cried madame Fraser, "dere is nobody at all dat can love like de François! De Frenshman's love is, indeed, l'amour unique—it is truly le beau sentiment! Ah!"

"Yet," said Sholto, "there is a prejudice here that Frenchmen only marry from interested motives."

"Now that accusation comes very well from *you*, Mr. Sholto," said the duchess, "a young gentleman whose poetic effusions are in praise of interested marriages—madame, I will expose him—he deserves it—I will read you a sonnet—no—a poem, which he unintentionally dropped, and which I picked up and preserved for the edification of his fair acquaintance."

And she mercilessly read the amatory verses of poor Sholto, *despite* his deprecating looks. They certainly did more credit to his prudence than to his poetical talents.

I.

"I want a wife! a wife! ye gods, a wife!
But like a prudent man must look about me;
Too prudent cannot be one's choice for life,
And till I choose, the girls must do without me.

II.

"Whom shall I wed? There's beauty, wealth, and wit;
Accomplishments their various charms unfold;
But Cupid's arrows are most sure to hit,
When neatly pointed with a barb of gold.

III.

"Beauty will fade; few things on earth fade faster;
It flits while years their course are swiftly running;
Wit's darts many turn against her wedded master;
Accomplishments—there's nought on earth more stunning;

IV.

"Whether they come in instrumental riot,
Or vocal warblings, ballads, cavatinas,
(I would not risk my matrimonial quiet,
With Malibran, although she were a Venus;)

V.

"Whether they come in painting's glowing form,
Or any other missyish nick-nackeries,
Attracting coxcombs in a lounging swarm,—
I vote accomplishments all bores and quackeries!

VI.

"(But worst of all, the concert's din uproarious,
Hoarse grunting basso's, squalling female throats—
The thump'd piano mingling in the chorus,
The screaking fiddles' and faggotti's notes!

VII.

"All wooers about LOVE must make some splutter;
How pitiable, then, a case is his,
Who amorous nonsense is condemned to utter,
At the sopranos of some warbling miss!)

VIII.

"Marry for rank, then. Rank! a senseless name,
Derived from bones that rot in charnel houses!
Marry for love. What 's love? an empty flame,
That vanishes when lovers become spouses!

IX.

"But wealth! dear wealth! if once by me possessed,
I do not think I'd quickly let it slip;
More lasting 'tis than beauty's snowy breast,
Her sparkling eye, fair cheek, or rosy lip!

X.

"'Tis better than wit's quiddits; for whate'er
This world affords you'll purchase for bank-notes;
Give me then MONEY with my wedded fair,—
She may do aught she likes, but wear culottes!"

"There, madame," continued the duchess, when she had finished the perusal, "are Mr. Sholto Douglas's fixed and deliberate opinions on the subject of matrimony, which he

even took the trouble to versify. This is the gentleman who accuses Frenchmen of marrying from interested motives."

"Oh! je suis choquée! I do hope dat every demoiselle dat know him will inflict some severe *punition* for his vilain poetry. Juste ciel! I suppose he will next say dat Frenchwomen don't know how to love."

"Madame, I am incapable of saying or thinking so," said the poor culprit.

"If you did, sare, you would say une grande méprise. L'amour, chez les françaises, est un principe d'action qui vous enflamme, vous elève, vous electrise et vous inspire. I knew a demoiselle who vas seeck, and she send for a medecin who bleed her. He cut an artery, and de blood spout in torrents. Her femme de chambre scream, and her friends, dat vas gathered round about her, reproach de medecin *fortement* for such grande gaucherie. He fling himself upon de knees before her, 'Ah! pardonnez, mademoiselle,' dit il, 'il est vrai, trop vrai, helas! que je vous ai tué—Mais voici à vos pieds un

créature miserable qui vous prie de le pardonner avant que de quitter cette vie!' He look so graceful, so distrait, so misérable, so charmant, dat she fall in love vid him impromptu. 'Give me paper, pen, ink!' she cry. 'Dis poor young medecin who kill me, vill never get no practice in his profession after making une si grande méprise! He is young, and vat is life to him if he do not get bread? I vil leave my whole fortune to him!' And, monsieur Sholto Douglas, while de life was ebbing from de demoiselle, quick, quick, quick! she write her will, she leave all she had to de medecin, and expire in his arms! Oh! que c'etait magnifique. Vive l'amour! vive le sentiment!"

"If she could have been married to the physician in the last few minutes that remained," said I, "it would have added to the scene."

"Assurément. But den he vas probably too distrait to tink of de most properest way of proposing for her."

"The French excel," said Sholto, "in matrimonial proposals."

"Ah, qu' oui!" exclaimed madame rapturously. "I vas married tree time—and my first cher mari vas Frenshman. Oh! how he *did* make his proposes! Vid tant de jugement, tant de legéreté, tant de delicatesse! He fall on de knee, he press my hand, he exclaim, 'Ah, chere demoiselle, deux personnes tres gaies ne peuvent jamais s'ennuyer ensemble. Allons! chantons! dansons a l'autel!' and den we was marry. Ah!"

"And how did your Italian husband press his suit?" said the duchess.

"He frown furieusement, he exhibit a poniard, and he swear by San' Genuario dat he murder first me and den himself, enfin qu'il assassineroit tout le monde, if I vould not marry him."

"And your Scotch husband?"

"Ah, monsieur L'Ecossois didn't never ask me at all—he run off vid me and marry me in spite of me. I suppose he is somewhere in dis

Edimbourg—if he want me to live vid him again, I can tell him I never won't forgive him unless he ask my pardon trés humblement."

When I retired to bed, Sholto sat some time in my room, and I slightly reproved him for not having told me I should find his illustrious aunt at Garloch's lodging. "I don't wonder," said he, laughing, "that you should not consider her company the best possible restorative after a long voyage; my uncle is so tired of her that he went to bed hours ago."

"And madame de Maillard Fraser?"

"*She* has come to Scotland in pursuit of her runaway husband. The moment the poor man heard of her arrival in Edinburgh, he took flight to St. Kilda; where he means to remain among the winds and waters, in the hope that his remote retreat may escape her penetration, until she returns to France. She ran him dreadfully in debt on the continent, and he trembles lest she should renew the same frolic in Scotland."

CHAPTER XIX.

MY FATHER THROWS COLD WATER ON THE FIRE OF MY GRANDE PASSION.

NEXT day, like a dutiful son, I waited on my father; and in a fit of filial candour, informed him that Flora was the daughter of the man who hated him without any reason for cherishing that amiable feeling; and that *I* was determined to marry the said Flora, provided that my father vouchsafed his parental consent.

"Hum—and how did you contrive to fall in love with her?"

"Upon my word, sir, I don't know; except, perhaps, that *she* was somewhat fascinating, and that *I* was somewhat susceptible."

"Pray, my sapient son, has her father consented to your addressing her?"

"No, sir."—

"Then neither will I. *His* consent must be obtained before I can give mine. I never will

abet clandestine courtship. *My* son shall never be rejected by Dunsneath. Spare me all appeals and protestations; from this resolution I will not depart a single inch."

"And *if* Dunsneath should acquiesce?" said I; although I must confess that when the words passed my lips, I felt that Dunsneath's acquiescence was something like a forlorn hope.

"That would alter the case, I acknowledge," said my father.

Forth I sallied, and turning the corner of George Square, I met Sholto, to whom I detailed the conversation I had just had with my father.

"Don't despair," said Sholto; "we shall find a remedy ere long. Are you going to the palace? the king has returned to Edinburgh."

"Has he? then I must go to the Canongate to get the French despatches; I should lose no time in laying them before his majesty."

"Je vous y accompagnerai," said Sholto, gaily.

CHAPTER XX.

HOPES AND FEARS.

To Garloch's lodging in the Canongate, Sholto and I proceeded in the afternoon. We entered a sort of anteroom that adjoined the library; and throwing ourselves upon an old-fashioned sofa, began to converse, at intervals, upon the subject nearest to my heart.

"Oh!" exclaimed I, "if the king would but try to mollify your father's opposition."

"Not the least chance in the world of it," answered Sholto.

My countenance fell.

"Are you serious, Sholto?"

"Perfectly, I assure you."

"Then what is to be done?"

"*Alors comme alors*," answered he.

"Sholto, do not trifle with my feelings."

"I only do my duty, Malcolm, in desiring you not to indulge any hope—*from that quarter*."

We now heard voices loudly debating, in the neighbouring library, some subject, which, if we were to judge from the energetic accents of the speakers, appeared to possess unusual interest.

The door, which had been shut, was opened by some person within, who loudly repeated, "But it *must* be so—I am absolute in this—you know the penalty, and I tell you it shall be enforced to the very letter, if you are obstinate."

Then looking into the anteroom, he exclaimed,

"Come in, younkers; this concerns one of ye."

The speaker, to my utter astonishment, was no other than Sandy M'Dow, the minstrel of Glenquiddart; the other personage of the dialogue was——Dunsneath.

"Sandy!" exclaimed I.

"Ay, Sandy, an it like ye," said he, laughing for an instant, and then immediately resuming an expression of solemnity, nay, sternness.

His dress was new and handsome; and I remarked that he could, when he pleased, throw aside all provincialities of idiom, though a strong Caledonian accent lurked behind.

"Now, Geordie Douglas," said he, with an air of inflexible determination, "answer me in presence of this youth, this Malcolm Hay—Do you, or do you not, consent to his addressing your daughter Flora?"

"I like not," said Dunsneath, "that his father's son should be the husband of my daughter."

"That is nothing to the purpose, sir. I did not ask you what you *liked*—I asked what you would do. Will you, or will you not consent to his addressing Flora?"

"I——WILL," replied Dunsneath, as if he could not help it.

Ungracious although the consent unquestionably was, and painfully extorted, yet the feelings of joy and gratitude it awakened in my breast, impelled me to offer my warmest acknowledgments to Dunsneath.

He received my thanks in sulky silence.

"D'ye no thank *me*, laddie?" asked Sandy, resuming the accent and tone of his humble vocation at Glenquiddart.

"Thank *you*?" I echoed, warmly grasping his hand; "indeed most sincerely and deeply do I thank you, my friend, my benefactor! I intreat your pardon for having for one instant doubted your power to assist me, which you now have so generously used."

"Not one word of that," said he; "in truth, my assurances *then* did not seem very probable, to say the least of it. But all is right now, and I wish you every joy, my dear young birkie."

Burning to learn the secret of his influence, I yet was afraid to make any inquiries regarding it, lest I might thereby hurt his feelings or

Dunsneath's. He perceived and appreciated my forbearance.

Dunsneath left the room.

"Geordie 's a stour auld chap," said Sandy, looking after him and laughing; "but he met his match in me, I'll be his bail. Malcolm, my boy, are you dying to tell Flora the good news?"

"I dare say she guesses it already," observed Sholto. "Did I not tell you, Malcolm, *to hope nothing from the king?*"

"Yes, but you cruelly kept me in suspense."

"Which was very soon removed, I think," said he.

We returned to the palace, and met our Highland friend, sir Dugald M'Laren, in the court.

"Ah, Malcolm!" exclaimed the good old knight, "I am blythe to meet you. I have come to town for the purpose of seeing the auld Bourbon—I suppose you can present me to-morrow, if his majesty permits?"

"Certainly, sir Dugald. I have already mentioned to the king your desire to be presented to him, and he very graciously said that whenever you should come to Edinburgh, he would be glad to see you."

On the following day, sir Dugald, by the king's appointment, came to court. I had received his majesty's instructions to usher him, without ceremony, into the presence-chamber, in which the king was sitting alone, dressed in a plain suit of black, unadorned with a star, or any decoration that might indicate the wearer's rank.

Sir Dugald advanced, and recognizing "Mr. Johnston," walked confidently up to him, at the same time grasping his hand, which he heartily shook, and saying,

"Weel, auld cock, how goes it?"

"Perfectly well, I am happy to say," replied the king, returning the knight's warm pressure; "I feel much improved in health and spirits by my second Highland trip."

"Your *second* Highland trip!" echoed the

knight; "did ye pass near Dalmanzie, may I venture to inquire?"

"Within ten miles of it, possibly."

"Without coming to see me? Ill dune! and very ill dune, that. You would have found it more agreeable, too, than you did on the former occasion, for our household has been somewhat ceevilized and mended since my youngest son brought home his wife; things are not left between M'Quade and Murdoch quite sae much as formerly."

"That is undoubtedly an improvement," said the king.

"You have made acquaintance, I presume, wi' the auld king of France," said sir Dugald, after a pause, "since I saw you at Dalmanzie; for I recollect you told me there that you knew him not."

"I told you I had never seen his face, sir Dugald."

"Why — why — what the deil" — exclaimed the knight, whose apprehension was suddenly alarmed by what seemed like an

equivoque—" if you ne'er saw his face, it is not very like that you knew him."

" In general, certainly, acquaintanceship involves a mutual knowledge of the faces of the parties concerned," said the king.

" *In general!*" echoed the knight; " why, truly, I should think it did so *always*: or, does auld Charlie Bourbon hide his face in a bag, unlike a' other folks—or how is it?"

" No," said his majesty, laughing, " he wears his physiognomy unbagged, exactly as other people do."

" You speak riddles, then," answered sir Dugald, " and my auld wit is dull at comprehension. I wish that his majesty would make his appearance. How soon do you think we may expect to see him?"

" He is generally here about this hour."

At this moment an inner door opened, and the archbishop of Rheims approached with solemn, stately step. The king gave him some instructions respecting the reply to be made to a petition.

"Your majesty's wishes shall be obeyed," responded the prelate, with a very reverential obeisance.

The king glanced with keen and humorous archness at the Highland knight, who stood petrified with astonishment and shame.

At length sir Dugald found words wherewith to falter forth an attempt at an apology. The king took his hand, and shook it kindly.

"You ask me to forgive you, sir Dugald, when, in truth, it is *I* who should solicit *your* forgiveness. But, my excellent and hospitable friend, although I had a mind to amuse myself, yet you see I have consulted *your* feelings; your interview with me has been unwitnessed, save by Malcolm Hay. And to show me that you cordially forgive us all, may I pray you to be present on an occasion of approaching festivity, in which Malcolm is somewhat concerned —a *fête* matrimonial?"

Sir Dugald, who at first had been quite overwhelmed with confusion, felt completely reassured by the kindness of his majesty's

manner. They remained in conversation for an hour, and when the knight was once more in the court, I heard him blythely chaunting to himself the patriotic strain of Robert Burns:—

> "Edina, Scotia's darling seat,
> All hail, thy palaces and tow'rs;
> Where once, beneath a monarch's feet,
> Sate Legislation's sovereign pow'rs."

CHAPTER XXI.

I POP THE QUESTION.

In the evening I sought Flora, and found her alone. Never breathed there a girl who bore a more mortal antipathy to HUMBUG, as the reader may have possibly gathered: unless, indeed, he is so misjudging as to put down the young lady as being a great humbug herself.—I do confess, that as I approached her, with the offer of my heart and hand trembling on my tongue's end, I felt a flutter of joy not unmingled with a sensation of bashfulness, which awkwardly communicated itself to my manner.

"Flora—ah! dearest Flora—I am come—ah! Flora—I am come to—oh! you can decide my fate—I am come, my Flora—ah!"

"I see you, Malcolm, perfectly. You are

come, you tell me. Interesting intelligence, certainly. Well, what next?"

"Oh, Flora! I am come—to—to"——

"To offer me your heart and hand, I suppose?"

"Yes."

"Well, do it like a man, if you can, and not like a monkey."

"Plague take your self-possession!" exclaimed I, suddenly starting up from my knee, upon which I had fallen in an attitude that might have won the approval of even madame de Maillard Fraser; "you make me ashamed of myself."

"Proceed, sir," said Flora.

"You like brevity, it would seem?"

"Yes," said Flora.

"Then—will you marry me?"

"Yes."

"Will you give me a kiss?"

"You may take one." I took the proffered kiss.

"Now, that is going to work rationally,"

said Flora; "when a thing 's to be said, why may it not be said in two seconds, instead of stuttering and stammering two hours about it? Oh, how cordially I *do* hate all *niaiseries!*" exclaimed the merry maiden, clasping her hands energetically.

"Well, then," said I, "humbug apart, what day shall we fix for our marriage?"

"*That* I shall leave to my dear adopted mother, the duchess d'Angoulême."

"Well, ask her as soon as you can, and relieve my anxiety."

"You scarcely deserve it," said Flora, laughing, "after such a preposterous entrée as you made, with your '*oh's*,' and your '*ah's*,' and your knees to the ground."

"Well, I mended matters, did I not?"

"You did—thanks to me, for laughing you out of your absurdity."

"Flora, shall we be very happy when we are married?"

"Probably, if you are well-tempered. A cross husband is the greatest curse on earth."

"Except a cross wife," said I.

"Both are sufficiently bad," quoth Flora, "but I trust and think that *we* shall never be called on to weigh experimentally their comparative disadvantages."

"Another kiss, Flora?"

"Not until we're married, sir."

"Then get along with yourself, and make the duchess d'Angoulême appoint the day." And Flora vanished.

CHAPTER XXII.

I LEARN SANDY'S HISTORY.

I HAD promised to spend the evening with Sholto, in the Canongate. On arriving at Garloch's lodging, we found tea very cozily arranged in the library.

"Here," said Sholto, "we shall be safe from either aunt Dalton or the Frenchwoman; they do not penetrate into this region of mustified literature, which is unaccountable enough so far as my aunt is concerned; but such is the fact. We may, however, have somewhat more agreeable company."

So saying, he stirred the fire, and looked as if he expected the entrance of some person every moment. His expectations were fulfilled in the appearance of Sandy M'Dow, who

stumped into the library about a quarter of an hour after my arrival.

"Well, Malcolm," said the inexplicable violinist, "I give you all manner of joy—is the happy day fixed?"

"Yes, sir; this day month."

"Should nothing prevent, I presume you mean. You know the old proverb of the cup and the lip. But I don't want to cloud your spirits with anticipations of disappointment; indeed your breeze seems right for harbour, now.—I saw the little girl an hour ago—poor thing, her mind seemed greatly fluttered—she brailed up her mainsail to wipe her eyes when she saw me coming, for the truth of the matter is, that she was crying; girls will always cry, though—that's a part of the ceremony they never omit, if they like the lover ever so well; so we must regard it as a matter of course, which it is."

"I must repeat my warmest thanks to *you*, Mr. Sandy, for all your good offices"—

"To which I have added," said he, "by

composing an epithalamium to be sung upon your wedding day. Here's stanza the first:—

> 'Auld Holyrood, thy wa's hae seen
> Queer sights in ages past, they say,
> But cheer thy heart, for weel I ween,
> A merry rouse thou'lt see to-day.'

That 's not bad for a beginning, but we'll mend as we proceed.—And now, lad, are ye dying to find out *how* I've worked your job sae weel, and *wha* I am?"

"Indeed, sir, I must confess, I'm sorely puzzled."

"Ye're clean bumbazed!" said Sandy, laughing. "Well, then," he continued, dismissing altogether his Caledonian idioms, "you shall know my real history—your patience deserves this reward, for you have not been inquisitive, but were content to let me serve you in my own way, and without asking any questions.

"Know, then, that *I* am the laird of Dunsneath. I am Geordie's elder brother, and Flora's uncle. You stare, and no wonder.

But the story of my wayward lot will fully account for my present apparent condition.

"I married, rather early in life, the daughter of a mechanic in one of our western villages. The neighbours marvelled at a match so immeasureably beneath my birth; but were silent, through the mingled feelings of respect and awe which they entertained for the laird. Our marriage was childless, which gave me much uneasiness. For my wife I felt a warm attachment, which was, however, clouded by our want of offspring; *miffs* will occasionally happen, even in the happiest marriages, and in those days, I regret to say, my temper was extremely violent. It chanced that on some occasion of dispute between my wife and myself, I became incensed in proportion as I felt that I was wrong; and among other injurious exclamations, I reproached her in the presence of the servants with her want of birth, observing, passionately, that I might have expected such ignorant obstinacy in a person of low origin. She said not a word, but wept.

She went out to walk along a steep path that overhung the rocky coasts of Kintyre; her eyes, I do believe, were dimmed with tears, and not distinctly seeing the narrow and dangerous footpath, she fell over the verge to a depth of nearly a hundred feet, and was miserably bruised to death. Her body was found in little more than an hour, by some fishermen, and as *I* had been seen among the rocks by some persons who had passed, a dark suspicion crossed the minds of the whole neighbourhood, that poor Margaret's death was *my* doing,—in short, that in a fit of diabolical frenzy, I had hurled her from the crag. The violent expressions I had used that morning, rose up in judgment against me, and strongly supported the presumption of my guilt.

"But no legal proof could be had. There were not even circumstantial grounds for an arrest. No one had seen me *with* her; she had left the house *alone*. The only circumstances tending to create an idea of my criminality, were our violent dispute that morning,

in which I had certainly betrayed ungovernable passion; and the accident of two straggling filbert-pickers having seen me among the rocks in the neighbourhood, at the distance of perhaps half a mile from the spot where the fatal event had occurred, and within a period of a quarter of an hour before the body was discovered.

"These were the only *facts* against me. But although they were far short of legal proof, I quickly found the suspicion excited in the neighbours of every class, was so deeply, so firmly rooted, that my further existence at Dunsneath became intensely miserable. Naturally alive to the sympathies of human nature, I could not endure a complete condemnation to Coventry by the people of all ranks. The lairds passed me by, with the coldest and most distant raising of their hats; and it seemed as if this mark of courtesy was barely practised, lest the neglect of it might subject the defaulter to a hostile challenge from me. The peasantry, who had not the

fear of steel or lead before their eyes, waxed even bolder than the lairds; and instead of, as formerly, doffing their bonnets to Dunsneath, they sturdily trudged along without even vouchsafing me a passing glance. The manner of every living soul I met, spoke as plainly as words could have done, 'That man is the murderer of his wife.'

"It was utterly intolerable, Malcolm. I resolved to quit Dunsneath, but whither should I flee? If I remained in Scotland, still bearing my own name, and seeking the society of persons in my own class, I knew the suspicion of blood would pursue me; so that as long as I remained within my native country, a change of residence would have merely the effect of extending the sphere of my wretchedness.

"It is said that no man can be thoroughly miserable who is innocent. That a consciousness of guilt, had I been really criminal, would have greatly augmented my sufferings, I am perfectly convinced. Yet, guiltless though

I was of the foul crime laid to my charge, the iron had entered into my soul, and I felt that my anguish made me desperate. I cast away the attire of a gentleman, and, dressed as a peasant, was picked up by a press-gang in a seaport town.

"In the navy I continued to serve for some years, until disabled by a wound that deprived me, as you see, of my right leg. Those who in Scotland had ever known anything about me, were deceived by a report of my death. Whence this report originated, I know not; but it acquired credit from the circumstance of my brother's assuming the territorial name of Dunsneath, which, under certain conditions, I had given him permission to do. I still held the reins in my own hands, however; and had Geordie been restive about your addresses to Flora, I threatened to dispossess him of his lands and *lairdship*, and to vest them in the person of his son Sholto before his eyes; which step would have been so

galling to his fatherly pride, that he e'en struck sail; although, as you saw, it was with a very bad grace.

"Time, which blunts the edge of every feeling, blunted the acuteness of my sufferings. I loved my father-land in the deepest recesses of my soul. To be a perpetual exile from my native Scotland was not to be thought of. Yet, to resume my former position in society there, was utterly impossible, and to attempt it were merely to expose myself to renewed mortifications and wretchedness.

"I said to myself, that in a district remote from Dunsneath, where my person, (now much changed,) had never been known, and whither my tale had never penetrated, I might still in an humble grade enjoy the happiness of beholding the stupendous magnificence of Scottish scenery, and indulge in colloquial intercourse with my honest-hearted and intelligent countrymen. I pitched on the wild and unfrequented valley of Glenquiddart, where *you*, my friend Malcolm, first saw me.

Ah! I had heard of your movements and projects from Flora, with whom I often correponded. Your journey to Dalmanzie, and his majesty's incognito, were no secrets to *me*, whatever the latter may have been to the poor knight; who, àpropos, was an old and real friend of mine, and almost the only man I ever could get to place unhesitating faith in my innocence.

"And now, I suppose you will ask me how I could possibly support the society of the roturiers, with whom alone I could mingle at Glenquiddart.

"Undoubtedly, a man brought up in a certain rank of life, and early accustomed to certain conveniencies and elegances, and habituated to the intercourse of those whose intellects have been awakened and enlarged by education, will necessarily experience an unpleasant change in becoming the associate of persons whose minds are comparatively unenlightened, and whose manners are rustic and uncouth.

"But mark—much of this arises from *contrast;* and of contrast the effect is seldom permanent. I have been brought up in a laird-like mansion with an excellent library; I have lived in handsome apartments, where comfort, nay luxury, were consulted in all the arrangements. I have quitted these hereditary possessions, and been tossed for years upon the stormy sea; I have returned mutilated, to my native country, and herded with its peasantry in their humble cottages, apparently undistinguished by rank or wealth from themselves. Through these changeful scenes have I passed; and what is the result of my varied experience? It is *this;* that so far as my personal happiness is concerned, I would not exchange the wooden settle in the cottar's ingle-neuk for the gilded fauteuil in the nobleman's drawing-room.

"This is because I have learned to look upon things as they really are; and to know what does, and what does not, produce actual happiness."

"You surprise me extremely," said I; "you are evidently a man of active intellect, and how you could possibly enjoy happiness when deprived of intellectual society, I cannot understand."

"My dear Malcolm, it is true that when domiciled in Luckie's kitchen at Glenquiddart, I had few opportunities of enlarging my own stock of information. But my intellect did not therefore stagnate. If I could no longer *learn* myself, I could still employ my mind in the profitable task of enlightening others."

"But surely this employment cannot have interested you."

"Pardon me; it afforded me considerable interest."

"What! when sunk down into companionship with peasants?"

"Ay," said he, smiling, "when I found that I could turn that companionship to the essential benefit of my new associates. And really, now,—as to what is termed intellectual society, I must candidly confess that I take

quite as much pleasure in hearing douce auld Donald Donaldson, exerting *his* intellect, sharpened by sexagenarian experience, in devising some mode of checking the ravages of the wheat fly, or Davie Maxwell describing an improvement he has made in the plough, as I should in hearing a learned astronomer tracing the eccentric vagaries of a comet through the void of space, or a wily politician detailing the trickeries of a pending negotiation."

"And what," asked I, "did you principally teach your peasant comrades?"

"I taught them to seek every *attainable* improvement suited to their station; and I taught them that their humble lot might furnish fully as much happiness as far more distinguished positions in life."

"I fear," said I, "that so far as concerns the latter branch of your instructions, you taught them wrong. The highest happiness is derived from intellectual enlargement; and a peasant does not possess the same opportu-

nities for this, as a person in the higher walks of life."

Sandy shook his head. "I am not at all sure," said he, "that beyond a certain point, the more we know, the happier we are."

"Granted," quoth I; "but is this point then within the peasant's reach? *Can* he, with his opportunities, know enough to render him as happy as knowledge can make man?"

"He can," replied Sandy. "Above all, and before all, let him have RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE: this is the surest foundation for happiness, *here* as well as hereafter. This is, at all events, within the peasant's reach. As to *doctrines*, let him have the creeds, and the ten commandments, and let him be fully impressed with the golden Christian rule of doing as we would be done by; a rule which teaches that the spirit of religion is the spirit of universal love."

"Undoubtedly," said I. "But waving the question of religious instruction, let us come

to those branches of knowledge which are certainly beyond the peasant's reach, and the study of which may confer great pleasure on the student—astronomy for instance."

"Fudge!" exclaimed Sandy, kicking his wooden leg against the floor, in token of contemptuous impatience; "as if a *chield* couldn't be as happy *without* astronomy as *with* it! When the peasant surveys from the hill-side at night, the blue heaven above him, glowing with its millions of bright stars, whose diamond rays flash conviction to his unsophisticated bosom that the POWER THAT MADE THEM IS DIVINE,—does he not enjoy the glorious scene with a zest as true, as full, as holy, as if he knew by heart each nickname that fantastic science has bestowed upon the lustrous orbs?"

"No disrespect to astronomy, though," said I, smiling.

"None meant—none meant. I know too well the service it has rendered to my own peculiar art of navigation, to quarrel with it. I

merely meant to show, in reply to your question, that it is not necessarily conducive to individual happiness; the peasant does not need it to add to his felicity."

"Well, sir," said I, "let us take another illustration. The study of history is a source of great pleasure. You will not, surely, tell me that the farmer can have as much of this pleasure as the gentleman?"

"Pooh! that 's a foolish mode of arguing the question. No doubt he cannot—and he cannot have as much music as the public pianoforte-player, nor as much of the pleasure of novel-reading as the countess on her sofa, nor as much political information as the prime minister, and yet he may be happier than any of them, or than all of them put together. The beneficent Creator hath so ordered our capacities of enjoyment, that *one* man may derive more pleasure from his smaller knowledge, than another man will from his greater. And I tell you,—for I know it by my experience,—that the snatches of intellectual exer-

cise enjoyed by the peasant in the intervals of rest from bodily labour, are far sweeter to him, than the constant exertion of intellect is to the student, or philosopher, who never does anything but read, write, or preach. The peasant enjoys his scrap of history or romance, with a keenness of relish proportioned to its rarity; so you see, *the balance of happiness is still kept up.*"

"I am glad," said I, "that you find so much cause to congratulate your humble associates. If I were in your place, I could not so easily acquire content among rough-spun, uneducated peasants. I should constantly regret my native sphere, and its habits of refinement."

"No doubt," said Sandy, "my peculiar situation, in a very great measure, accounts for my contentment. After years of unjust aspersion at home, and hard service at sea, O! it was truly delightful to find a quiet haven of repose in that secluded glen. We love the spot, be it ever so rude, that affords us a

peaceful shelter in our need. Besides, I loved to look on happiness; the peasants of Glenquiddart have a kind-hearted resident landlord, and I soon became happy among *them*, when I saw that they were happy around *me*. I felt happy in their happiness, and also in being able to add to it."

"But your pride must have somewhat suffered?"

"Not the least. *There* I had no pride that could be mortified, for I never had been known to a single inhabitant as any other than Sandy M'Dow, the sailor minstrel. I possessed considerable musical talent, and a great facility of throwing into rhyme such sentiments and events as I wished to impress upon the minds of my rustic auditories. I made them all speedily familiar with such historical facts as best suited the object I had in view; namely, that of convincing them that happiness is the dower of the cottage as well as of the palace; I fiddled away, and sang away; I felt that I did good by contributing to the gratification,

improvement, and contentment of my hearers; and I flung all lingering relics of *pride* to the dogs, receiving in exchange a *quantum sufficit* of mental satisfaction."

"You're an *unco* man, sir," said I.

"One thing I know," said Sandy, laughing; "that as long as I live I sha'n't surrender my post in the Glenquiddart ingle-nook: I have found real happiness there, and whenever I find a good thing, I like to keep it."

After we had conversed on Sandy's various nautical adventures, of which he gave me a very diverting detail, and after he had expressed his penitence for the quizzical budget of fictions he had imposed on the king's credulity at Luckie M'Cowie's, I asked him to explain to me the motive that influenced his brother to entertain such implacable enmity against my father. "The hereditary feud——," said I.

"Hereditary fiddlestick!" said Sandy; (he never would allow me to call him anything but Sandy;) "I can't conceive what Geordie's ob-

ject was, in uttering such nonsense. The quarrel shows his spiteful, unforgiving disposition; it all arose from jealousy. Geordie was in love with your mother; your father was his rival, and succeeded in winning her hand, and Geordie never could forgive him for it. There 's the whole secret in two words—and the more shame for Geordie."

In all that Sandy had said upon the subject of his own *roturier* happiness, I fancied I saw something like an effort to make the best of a *pis-aller;* something like a bold attempt at self-persuasion. However, if such were the case, the bold attempt had succeeded remarkably well; for I must acknowledge, that from what I saw of him at Glenquiddart, and also from his manifest anxiety to return there from Edinburgh, he seemed to have achieved for himself a full conviction that Luckie M'Cowie's ingle-neuk was the nucleus of human felicity.

CHAPTER XXIII.

FLORA AND I COME TO AN UNDERSTANDING, OR SOMETHING LIKE ONE, WITH EACH OTHER.

"MAY every happiness attend your nuptials, Malcolm," said the king, who had not seen Sandy, and who vaguely understood that the intervention of some old relative had removed all difficulties. "Your Flora's lovely brow shall be gemmed with diamonds of the richest, rarest sparkle, whose value may perhaps be enhanced in her eyes, by their being a gift from the old Bourbon."

The period when the king pronounced these words, was just about the time when the resolution to quit Scotland and settle in Germany first was formed by the royal exiles.

Flora was aware of the locality selected before I had learned it.

"Gratz in Styria," said she; "and I believe a somewhat disagreeable place."

"If so, Flora, you are fortunate in having such an excellent excuse for remaining in Scotland as your marriage will afford you."

I had often seen Flora out of spirits, and *sometimes* I had seen her rather pettish, but I never saw her regularly angry before.

"An excuse for remaining in Scotland!" she repeated, while her flushed brow and flashing glance announced the wrathful mood my remark had excited; "do you mean, Mr. Hay, to insult me? Do you suppose that I either could, or *would* avail myself of *any* excuse for deserting my royal benefactress? You wrong me grievously and grossly by the supposition, and I beg at once to know if your purpose was deliberately to offend?"

Somewhat startled by the maiden's impetuosity, I replied, that most certainly I had not intended to offend her; that I could not conceive how my innocent remark could have proved so offensive to her feelings.

"That is another insult," she angrily replied. "What! quit the duchess d'Angoulême, who loves me as a mother? who has invariably treated me with the kindness, the affection, the profuse generosity of one? leave *her*, who is now in exile, and in sorrow—banished from her native kingdom to wander on a foreign shore in quest of shelter! and who, more than ever, needs the sympathetic services of attentive gratitude, from the object of her princely munificence!"

I was now completely piqued, and I answered with much warmth, and no prudence,

"You are certainly bound by golden chains."

"There are persons," she replied, with scorn, "who can only understand two sorts of chains—of gold and of iron—who can conceive the tie of interest or that of coercion, and who have not a conception of any other."

"Well, Flora," said I, in a calmer tone, and after a pause, "I beg your pardon."

"From the scantily portioned daughter of a not very wealthy Scottish laird," resumed

Flora, "the duchess has made me the possessor of a fortune, befitting a far higher rank—I value her bounty *less* for its *sterling* worth, than for the evidence it affords, among a thousand other proofs, of her warm affection for me. And to leave *her*—O! Mr. Hay—O, Malcolm, I WILL believe, for your own sake, that you spoke in haste."

There was a slight indication of relenting here, although her tone was still sufficiently lofty to arm all my pride. She made another advance towards kindliness:—

"The duchess's bounty, Malcolm, I have expressed my perfect willingness to bestow on *you*, which might have induced you to withhold your unmerited taunt as to my motives. —But, perhaps," she added, checking herself, "you do not mean to follow the fortunes of the royal exiles into Germany?"

"Flora, I shall be perfectly candid with you. This sudden resolution to quit Scotland, involves me in a very embarrassing predicament. I honour you for your devotion to your bene-

factress, and I solicit your forgiveness for a hasty and intemperate word. My own obligations to the king are such, that I could have willingly lived and died in his service, if other, *prior* duties did not exact my observance. You see my father's failing health; I cannot leave my parent in Scotland, I must stay

'To rock the cradle of declining age,'

as long as that parent is spared to me."

"So that," observed Flora, musingly, "with *you* in Scotland, and with *me* in Germany"—

"Well? what then?" asked I."

"It's something like a regular blow-up," said she.

"At least for the present, it would seem so," I observed. "And how provoking! after uncle Sandy took the trouble of travelling to town from Glenquiddart, to set things to rights, with his wooden leg!"

"It *is* awkward—certainly," said Flora.

We submitted to our fate most magnanimously; Flora sailed with the banished family

from Leith, in the United Kingdom steamer, on the 18th of September, 1832; and I very dutifully stayed at home to mind my father.

I verily believe that half the excitement called *love* is mere fancy; I know that I have eaten, drank, and slept, since the heroine's departure, as well as ever I had done at any former period.

Perhaps I may marry her yet, though. Stranger things have come to pass.

October 29, 1832.

THE END.

G. Woodfall, Printer, Angel Court, Skinner Street, London.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA
3 0112 043431631